

Throwback: "My relationship with Kabir could be viewed in terms of homosexuality." - Mahesh Bhatt

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STARDUST

**Erotica Or
Porn? Is
India ready
for sexual
themed
content?**

**Accused of
"publicity
stunt", Juhi
Chawla
finally
explodes!**

**"Songs that promote filth
and pathetic language have
nothing to do with music."**

-Daler Mehndi

**Mocked, trolled and called 'underdogs'!
Siddharth Malhotra, Kiara
Advani, Kriti Sanon... fight back!**

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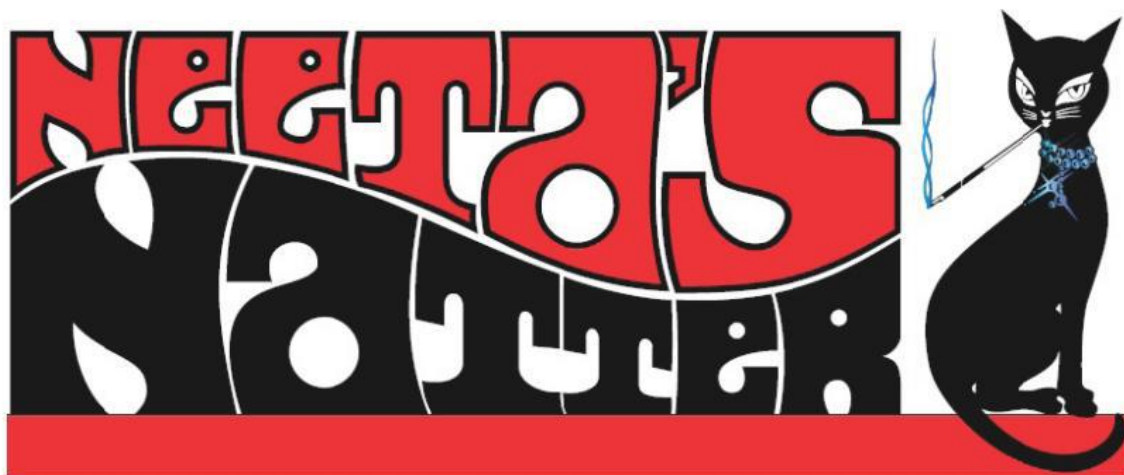
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It was Saif Ali Khan's 51st birthday and the *begum* who always knows best, whisked him away to an undisclosed venue in Maldives along with her two munchkins Taimur and Jeh for a romantic getaway in the land of azure waters, sun 'n' sand. That's right, Kareena looking super sexy in an itsy bitsy pink bikini brought in her Nawab's birthday in style. No wonder, Saif looked as if he was literally in paradise.

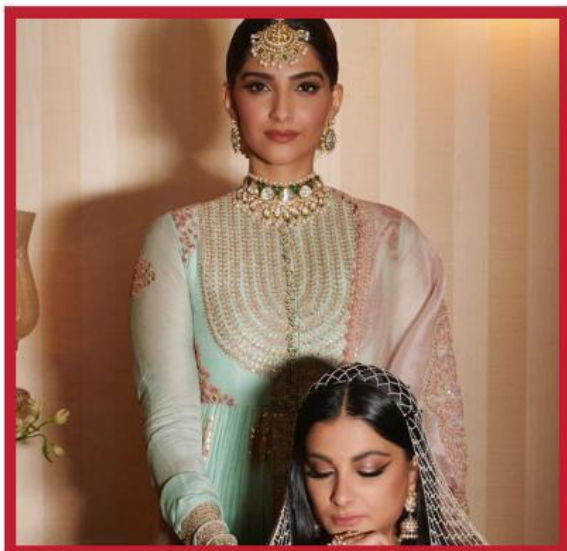
In the meantime, Sarah Ali Khan grandly wished her *abba* posing for a picture with dad Saif Ali Khan, Kareena and little Jeh. What was special about this was that for the first time baby Jeh's picture was released on social media, and the little one looks exactly like his big brother Taimur. ...Guess this li'l munchkin like his brother Tai is going to be another fave of the pap's.



Talking about the pap's, it was amusing to see Taimur stop and pose for pictures at the shutterbug's requests. Pop Saif had taken him and his cousin Inaaya for a joyride and when they were back, though the photographers clamoured for Saif's pictures, he just walked off followed by a terrified Inaaya. Tai in the meantime took stock of the situation and stopped and posed for the shutterbugs like an actor. Looks like the genes have spoken, this boy sure has all the makings of a superstar.



Supposedly, Kareena Kapoor Khan was brutally trolled after she announced that her second son has been named Jehangir or Jeh. The social media was up in arms against her as they claimed she had named her son after a Mughal emperor. Did that bother our *begum* lady? Not at all, all Kareena did was jerk her head 'Poo' like and pout, "It's a private decision, darlings and honestly, I don't bother about negativity. I prefer to meditate instead."



Sonam Kapoor was in town after two years and she insisted it was only to see her family. But what the Kapoor's didn't let on was that their second daughter Rhea Kapoor was getting married to her long time boyfriend Karan Boolani at Anil Kapoor's Juhu bungalow. It was a super private ceremony and pictures of the couple were put on social media only one day after the wedding. Just the family including Sonam Kapoor along with Anand Ahuja, Janhvi Kapoor, Arjun Kapoor were seen attending the low-key wedding.

It was the father of the bride Anil Kapoor who caught everyone's eye as he just couldn't stop puffing out his chest in pride. He looked rather dapper too sporting a designer *kurta* and *dhoti* with an exquisite string of pearl around his neck. This man sure can teach a thing or two to the young 'uns about style.



Talking about young 'uns; Arjun Kapoor too looked rather cute standing protectively alongside his sisters Anshula and Khushi. Where was Janhvi? Well, she walked in fashionably late and then proceeded to take as many selfies as possible. One question, Arjun? Where was one Ms Malaika Arora? She was MIA. Hmm... anything we need to know?

Real life lovers Kiara Advani and Sidharth Malhotra have been winning hearts after the release of their movie *Shershaah*. The movie has got some amazing reviews and fans as well have praised 'SidKi's smokin' hot chemistry. And guess what, now the couple who have been keeping their affair under wraps for the longest time, is slowly coming out in the open. Don't believe us? Look at their social media...



Another rumoured real life lover, Vicky Kaushal and Katrina Kaif, have taken their relationship to the next level according to rumours. Supposedly, they have exchanged rings at a private ceremony and are now allegedly engaged. As for the wedding, supposedly that's on the cards too very soon.

Real life hero Sonu Sood who has been spending every waking hour helping people in distress, has taken out some 'me time' too. He was spotted cooking in the kitchen. And guess what, everything this man does, is perfect. Chef Sonu made some delicious *misal paav* which had everybody who tasted it, licking their fingers. Looks like Sonu truly wears many hats.



Sanjay Leela Bhansali is a happy man. Why you may so? Well, he's finally managed to rope in the iconic Rekha and Madhuri Dixit for his films *Heeramandi* which will be streamed on Netflix. Bhansali insists, "*Heeramandi* is an epic, first-of-its-kind series based on the courtesans of Lahore. It is an ambitious, grand and all-encompassing series." Well, with Rekha and Madhuri Dixit sharing the same frame, we are sure this will truly be a one of its kind series.

By the way roll the drums, Sanjay Leela Bhansali celebrates 25 years in cinema and all his favourites from Ranveer Singh, Salman Khan, Deepika Padukone, Alia Bhatt celebrated it by toasting to Sanjay Leela Bhansali on social media. Incidentally, Sanjay Leela Bhansali says he is wrongly called a 'dictator' on the sets, he's just very impatient and doesn't take to any truant behaviour from his stars. Is the Tiger listening?



Talking about iconic casting, recently Alia Bhatt, Priyanka Chopra and Katrina Kaif shared some awesome news for their fans. They will be seen in Farhan Akhtar and Zoya Akhtar's upcoming film *Jee Le Zara*. This film has been in the freezer for two years and so the world and its neighbour are thrilled that it's finally going to see the light of day that too with these fab ladies in it.



He has been saying it for some time now. But now he's finally succumbed to the thrill of picking up the director's baton. Yes, we are talking about Ajay Devgn who is making a directorial debut featuring Amitabh Bachchan and Rakulpreet Singh in a film titled 'Mayday'. Supposedly, Ajay is extremely excited about his directorial debut and so are we.

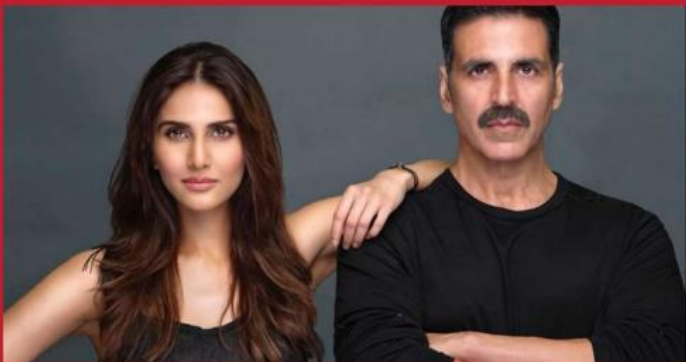
By the way, Devgn was delighted working with Amitabh Bachchan. Supposedly, Big B would be on the sets at the dot of time and though Devgn told him many-a-time to rest in his van whenever the production was taking time. Mr Bachchan would tell him, "No, I am sitting here and I'll keep rehearsing." No wonder, they call the Big B an icon.



'Chehre' director Romy Jafry has taken up cudgels for Rhea Chakraborty again. She said Rhea was called a 'witch' and 'gold-digger' last year and guess what, this year she was declared the most desirable woman. How's that for hypocrisy? Romy also insisted that 'Rhea is a great human being. She comes from a good family. When you will see her in 'Chehre', you will see how good an actor she is'.

Looks like this time we are dedicating this column to the amazing Kareena Kapoor Khan. But this super woman has been up to a lot of things from penning a book on pregnancy, fighting trolls, whisking hubby Saif and her kids for a planned holiday in Maldives to turning producer for a thriller which will be directed by Hansal Mehta. The project will also be co-produced by Ekta Kapoor and will be on the floors soon.





Akshay Kumar's *Bellbottom* will release soon and we are hearing rave reviews about this film already. Supposedly, it is an edge-of-the-seat thriller and has been penned amazingly well. What everybody actually is whispering about is

Akshay and Vani Kapoor's smokin' hot pairing. Looks like Akshay's heroines are getting younger and younger like our *Bhaijaan's*.

We know KJo is a style icon and knows everything in and out about fashion. But for God's sake, what on earth was he wearing for his reality show *Bigg Boss OTT*? We know the show is called OTT (over the top) but Karan's dressing too looked extremely bizarre and OTT, especially the suit he wore with mismatched fuchsia and gold pockets. He looked like Johnny Lever on a bad dressing day.



Cat's Crown

This month goes to...

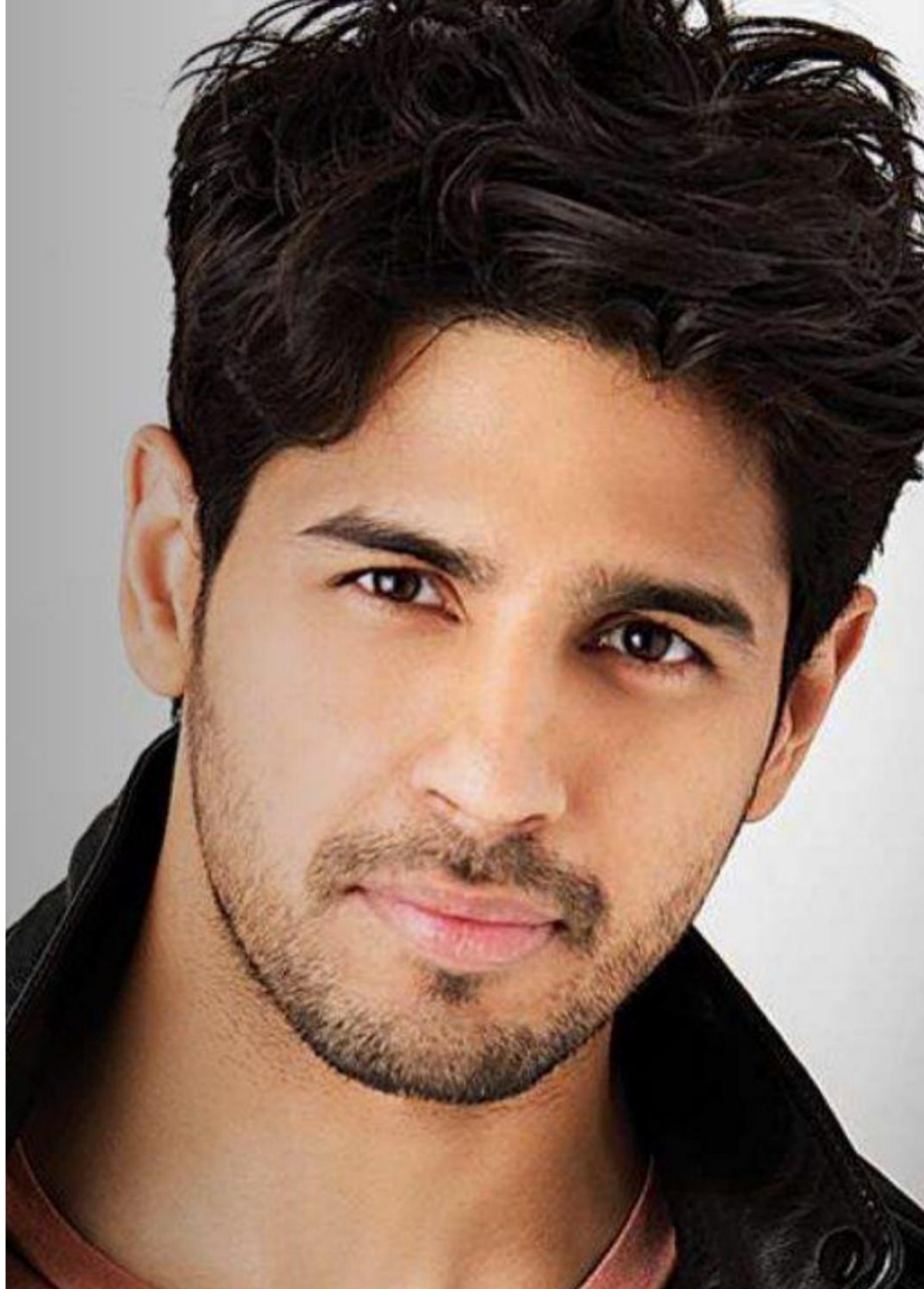
Priyanka Chopra and Nick Jonas who shared three years of togetherness. Everybody thought their marriage would collapse within months but the Jonas' are still going strong. Priyanka, who has recently become the chairperson of the Jio MAMI Film Festival, shared a picture of her holding Nick's hand and her caption read: "My everything.. 3 years today. Seems like a blink and a lifetime at the same time. I love you." Aww!

Goodbye Khans... Sidharth, Kiara, Kriti, Parineeti & Taapsee are here!

Earlier bracketed as mere 'underdogs', actors Sidharth Malhotra, Kiara Advani, Kriti Sanon, Parineeti Chopra and Tapsee Pannu have now grabbed the spotlight once again. **Sumita Chakraborty** finds out whether the underdogs are here to stay!

Not so long ago, they were slotted and pigeonholed as 'underdogs'. Though for all purposes, they were said to be A-list stars, yet there were hierarchy restrictions and nepotism norms amongst them and these stars could very well feel it - after all, they weren't any bigwig's son or daughter for them to get instant name, fame and success on a platter. They were the one's tottering around in the periphery of Bollywood's niche circles, invited to the parties of the rich 'n' famous, offered films yet could never challenge the supreme rule of the 'baba and baby's' of Tinsel Town.

Yes, we are talking about Sidharth Malhotra, Kiara Advani, Kriti Sanon, Parineeti Chopra and Tapsee Pannu - very talented individuals who to be fair, have had their turn in the spotlight yet elusive Lady Luck have often slipped out of their grasp.



Sid Takes Over

Take Sidharth Malhotra for instance - he had it all - good looks, a dream debut, talent and so much more - yet after *Student Of The Year*, his co-stars, Varun Dhawan and Alia Bhatt, outraced him far ahead while he was the proverbial *katchua* plodding around super slowly, looking lost and forlorn. In fact, though poor Sid had some great movies under his belt yet somehow or the other, they flopped rather miserably. The Box office just didn't seem to take to Sid. And as the flops piled up rather embarrassingly, Sidharth was trolled, mocked and ridiculed. People said he was too wooden to be an actor and even predicted he wouldn't last long and would be finished in no time. Poor Sid took it all on the chin rather stoically though his limpid brown eyes spoke volumes of the many emotional turmoils that he was going through. At that point, we had asked him if all the negativity fazed him out. Wasn't it a risk being in this profession? Sidharth had averred, "My entire life and journey has been a risk. I belong to South Delhi, and I came all the way to Mumbai to become an actor. I was a complete outsider and it was a complete risk! I have had my period of struggle too. When I came to Mumbai, I was unemployed for a long time. And I lived in the hope that I would get a break. I started out as an assistant director and even went through the critical phase of hoping and believing that I might make it someday as an actor. Of course, it was a huge risk! It took me five years to debut. I am used to the struggle and the risk."

And so while all his co-stars whizzed happily past him, Sidharth Malhotra worked his way through the obscure inky black vortex, slowly and steadily.



From being almost pushed out of Bollywood, Sidharth was back in the race and was now being called the newest superstar who managed to topple all the star kids and the Khan brigade.

The flops had totally messed up his value as an actor and just when he was being written off... the pandemic happened. Things suddenly changed in Bollywood. Theatres were closed and the OTT became the foremost channel for entertainment. Weaned on good world cinema, viewers now hungered for good content rather than watching aging superstars dishing out the same boring fare. Suddenly, nepotism and hierarchy became akin to the 'f' word and a new era of unlikely heroes came into the fore.

Not so long ago, they were slotted and pigeonholed as 'underdogs'. Though for all purposes, they were said to be A-list stars, yet there were nepotism norms - after all, they weren't any bigwig's son or daughter for them to get instant name, fame and success on a platter.

They say every dog has his day and the underdogs too suddenly found that the spotlight that was earlier so out of reach for them, was so much nearer. Sidharth Malhotra who was on the brink of extinction, was now back with a bang with *Shershaah* – a film on the valiant Captain Vikram Batra who was martyred in Kargil. The film and Sidharth won hearts, accolades and praises. From being almost pushed out of Bollywood, Sidharth was back in the race and was now being called the newest superstar who managed to topple all the star kids and the Khan brigade. The underdog had outwitted and outfoxed the competition and had emerged as the winner.

Jabardast Jodi

With *Shershaah*, Bollywood was staring perhaps at a new number one *jodi* too. Perhaps it was the palpable chemistry between the real life rumoured lovers – they were even spotted heading to Maldives for a holiday some time back – that was seen in abundance in the film but both Kiara and Sidharth are now being considered as one the most magical jodis –supposedly even in the ad world, they are replacing Ranveer Singh and Deepika Padukone. A tall feat indeed!



“I believed in myself and I knew my potential, I knew I had something, I was just waiting for that opportunity.”

– Kiara Advani

Kiara Conquers

Kiara Advani too has supposedly entered the elite ‘A plus’ bracket of Deepika Padukone, Katrina Kaif and Anushka Sharma. She was always tipped to be the winning horse especially by her mentor Karan Johar and the success of *Kabir Singh* got her a lot of mileage but though the 29-year-old Kiara did manage to shine, she still lagged behind in the numbers game. It took almost six heart-breaking years for Kiara to grasp this kind of stardom. In an interview, Kiara said, “Of course, it was heartbreaking. I am a human, at the end of the day. I did go into a shell, I felt lost, I felt like I didn’t know where I was going with my life or if I would get another film. And, I really wanted to work, but there were days and months of having absolutely nothing. But I believed in myself and I knew my potential, I knew I had something, I was just waiting for that opportunity. There is a saying that I believe in — when hard work meets opportunity, you get success. So, I continue to work hard, and prepare myself for such opportunities — so that when they come, I am ready.” And with *Shershaah*, Bollywood was staring perhaps at a new number one amidst the heroines.



Mimi Works

Another gorgeous contender amongst the underdog is Kriti Sanon who was always relegated to the glam doll brigade until *Bareilly Ki Barfi* and *Luka Chuppi* released. *Mimi*, a film made on surrogacy, was the cherry on the cake and it crowned Kriti as an actor par excellence.

Kriti who studied to be an engineer, didn't have any links with Bollywood. She says, "I come from a simple, middle-class family — my mom is a professor and dad is a chartered accountant. I am an engineer, and I had never thought that acting would be my profession. Initially, my relatives and friends told me that Bollywood is too big a dream to pursue and there are too many people who are struggling and want to be in this industry." Adding, "It took me some time to find my place in the industry. I was new to the city, came from a non-filmy background and knew nobody here. I did feel like a bit of a loner in these filmy parties, which sometimes I still do. Frankly, as you keep working, doing more films and meeting more people, you start feeling like you are part of the industry. However, reaching this far wasn't easy. I went for a lot of auditions before I got *Heropanti*, and I must say I was initially terrible at it (auditions). So, I don't think it was wrong of them (casting directors/filmmakers) to reject me. The rejections and the failures that you face make you stronger. I believe you learn a lot more from your failure than success."



She ends, "Success gives you a lot of confidence to move ahead and take risks. But my failures made me realise that I shouldn't be afraid and that I can overcome even a situation like this as well. I have been a learner and have constantly evolved, which is probably why I have reached where I am today."



"Success gives you a lot of confidence to move ahead and take risks. But my failures made me realise that I shouldn't be afraid and that I can overcome even a situation like this as well."

– Kriti Sanon

No More An Underdog

...If there's anybody who can also be called the epitome of an underdog, it is Parineeti Chopra. Though an excellent actor, Parineeti could never get out of cousin sis Priyanka Chopra's larger than life shadow. Life further derailed when her films collapsed at the box office one by one. She says, "Two of my films, *Daawat-e-Ishq* and *Kill Dil* didn't work. That was my first setback. Suddenly I didn't have money. I had bought a house and done big investments. Then I went through a big heart-break in my life. Literally all departments in my life were down and I had nothing positive to look forward to", adding that she practically retreated into a shell. Parineeti says, "I stopped eating, sleeping well, didn't have any friends at that time. I never met people. I cut off touch with everyone including my family. I would talk to them once in two weeks. I was gone. I just used to be in my room, watching TV, sleeping, getting up, staring all day. I was a zombie. I was typical filmy depressed girl. I would curl up on my sofa and sleep, falling ill all the time. I didn't meet the media for almost six months."

Parineeti further goes on to confess, "I was very unhappy with the work I was doing. I had faith in myself but the filmmakers just wouldn't offer me the parts I was yearning for. I was signing films half-heartedly. I was in a constant state of dissatisfaction." But thankfully, that phase ended. Parineeti says, "I will be forever indebted to three directors—Amol Gupte (*Saina*), Dibakar Banerjee (*Sandeeep Aur Pinky Faraar*), and Ribhu Dasgupta (*The Girl On The Train*). And indeed, they pulled this underdog out of the gloom and into the spotlight that she deserved."

"I was very unhappy with the work I was doing."

– Parineeti Chopra



Tapsee's Talent

...Likewise Tapsee Pannu, a competent actor, who has proved herself time and again. But unfortunately for her, Tapsee somehow never got the recognition that she deserved. The A lister producers in Bollywood continued to snub her despite the fact that Tapsee was an excellent actor who had held her own even in front of the great Amitabh Bachchan.

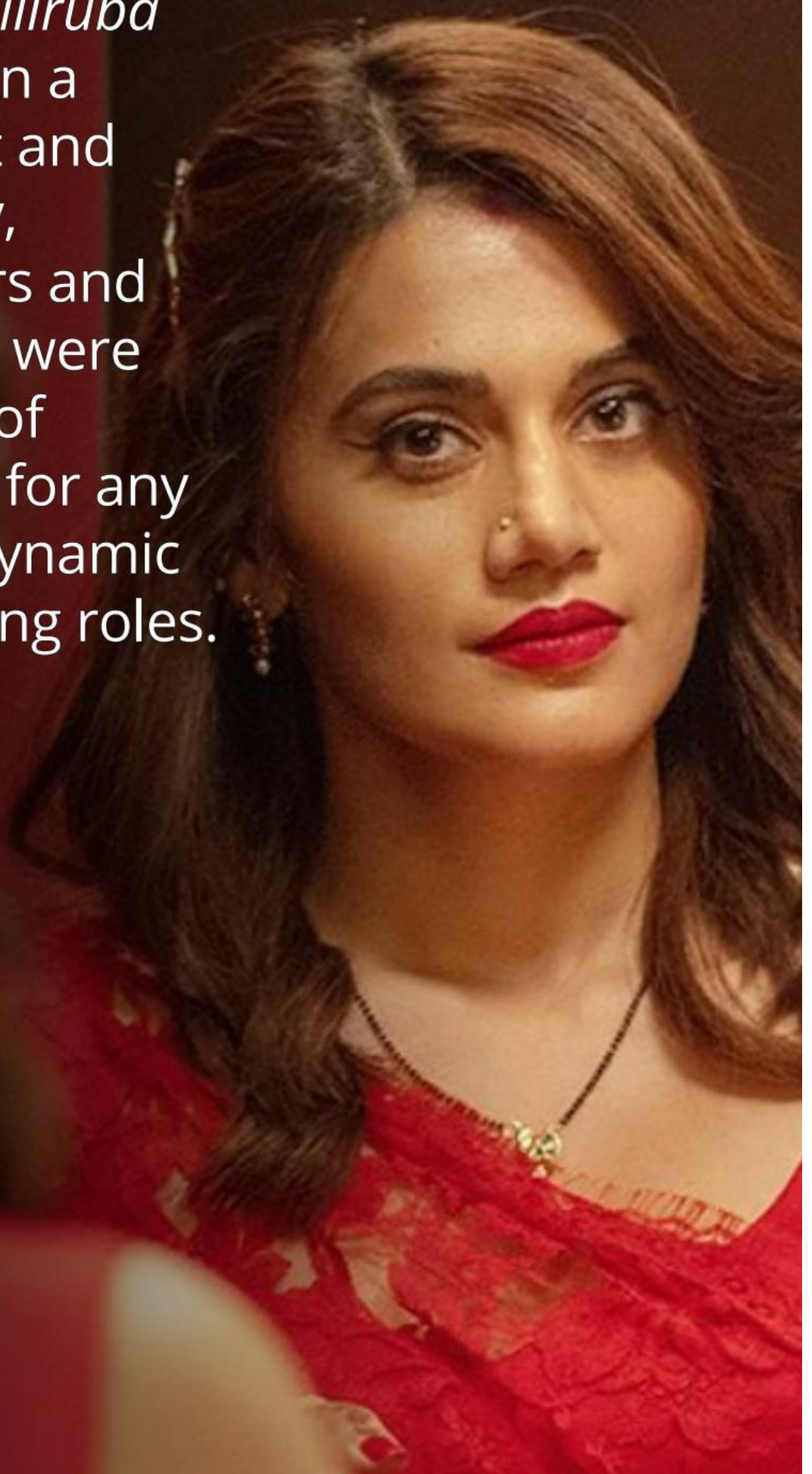
Until the pandemic struck Bollywood, ... and the exciting world of OTT opened up new avenues for thinking actors. Tapsee was one of them who shone in the digital beacon - be it in Hindi films or in regional ones. *Haseen Dillruba* saw her in a new light and suddenly, producers and directors were thinking of "Tapsee" for any kind of dynamic performing roles. Tapsee had finally arrived. And, how!

Indeed, the underdogs have seized power in Bollywood. And, how! Many actors relegated to side or character roles are now being offered leading roles. Like for example Pankaj Tripathi who is now ably carrying a film on his shoulder... like he did *Ludo* which also had Abhishek Bachchan and Aditya Roy Kapoor. But Pankaj Tripathi was given top billing and a swell job he did, indeed.

So is this phenomenon here to stay? Well, we hope so... for the underdog brings a new exciting dimension to the celluloid world and further more we do confess we are bored of the done to death outdated films of the so-called superstars of Bollywood. So we say, hail the underdogs, may they change the face of Bollywood.



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My Opinion

erotica or porn?

The OTT has practically brought adult content veering from full nudity to bold sexual acts into our homes ...and there is indeed a thin line between erotica and porn. Nandita Chatterjee digs deeper into what makes some sexual themed content dubbed 'legal' while others, 'lascivious' and improper.

Amid dimmed lights, two naked bodies are violently colliding, the man masked to give the illusion of another while satisfying his partner. Sound like the intro to a porn film? Not so much, what I've actually described

is a scene from Alt Balaji's web series *Gandi Baat*.

This brings us to one of the hottest topics on our social media timelines today, the arrest of Bollywood Diva, Shilpa Shetty's husband Raj Kundra



on the charges of production and distribution of illicit material. The matter has brought to the forefront the issue of producing sexual themed content in India where the production of pornographic material is against the law.

With OTT platforms coming in the spotlight, more adult appropriate content has made its way to the Indian viewer.

Technology Act says whoever “publishes or transmits or causes to be published or transmitted in the electronic form, any material which is lascivious or appeals to the prurient interest or if its effect is such as to tend to deprave and corrupt persons who are likely, having regard to all relevant circumstances, to read, see or hear the matter contained or embodied in it, shall be punished”.



Here's a closer look at the distinction between sexual themed content and adult content within a storyline and how it fits into the framework of the laws of the nation as well as the sensibilities of the average viewer in this part of the world.

According to Section 292 of the Indian Penal Code (IPC), content is deemed as obscene if it is “lascivious or appeals to the prurient interest. In addition Section 67 of the Information

So here's where some food for thought comes in , when terms like “lascivious ” or narratives suggesting the corruption of people (are used to define legality) the spectrum is rather wide and vague. Without explicitly describing the mechanics of what the material may contain ie full nudity, certain sexual acts how does one determine what exactly would constitute corruption and who are we exactly protecting?



For example, take a series like *Gandi Baat* on Alt Balaji that portrays how human beings turn desperate to fulfill their sexual needs, from cheating to committing heinous crimes. The series had a number of erotic scenes that were legitimately placed in accordance with the storyline. Would one say that the depiction in the series would possibly warrant corruption of minds within the population? While woven into the story that is helmed in rural India the characters are certainly relatable to many in the population. Similarly, in the series *Ragini MMS 2*, the theme borderline glorified the act of voyeurism and secret taping. The Netflix series *Sacred Games* had several sexually explicit scenes that ranged from erotic to full nudity. Of course in all the above examples the scenes themselves are less than

a few minutes and in most cases are inherent parts of the story. In a country that was previously bound by stone clad censorship, OTT platforms attempted to bring about themes that indicated the theory that sex can actually be used for portraying a mindset of human beings when it comes to desire instead of merely being a tool to just draw more viewers towards it. Even then one could argue that such themes could inspire a section of people to act in a certain manner hence possibly fitting into the legal framework of “corrupting minds” as well.

The flip side of that argument would be the degree of the act shown and the presumed purpose. Here is where we attempt to draw the line between stories that include themes that involve sexually explicit scenes

and the depiction of sexual content with the intent to arouse and exhibit. But the kicker again is that what determines the degree needed to corrupt someone and how do we funnel content to fit into our legal scope.

The pink elephant in the room is perhaps the concept of consent. While films on the permissible platforms are bound by the legal obligation to not only get consent of the actors but to also adequately compensate them for their work, what is deemed as porn is unregulated hence prone to physical, financial and sexual abuse. Whether or not an attempt at legalization would start to prevent such abuse is a rhetorical question at this point.

If we look at the West to see how other parts of the world are tackling the issue the Supreme Court of the United States held in *Ashcroft v. Free Speech Coalition* (2002) that pornography which involves consenting adults is protected by the First Amendment, therefore

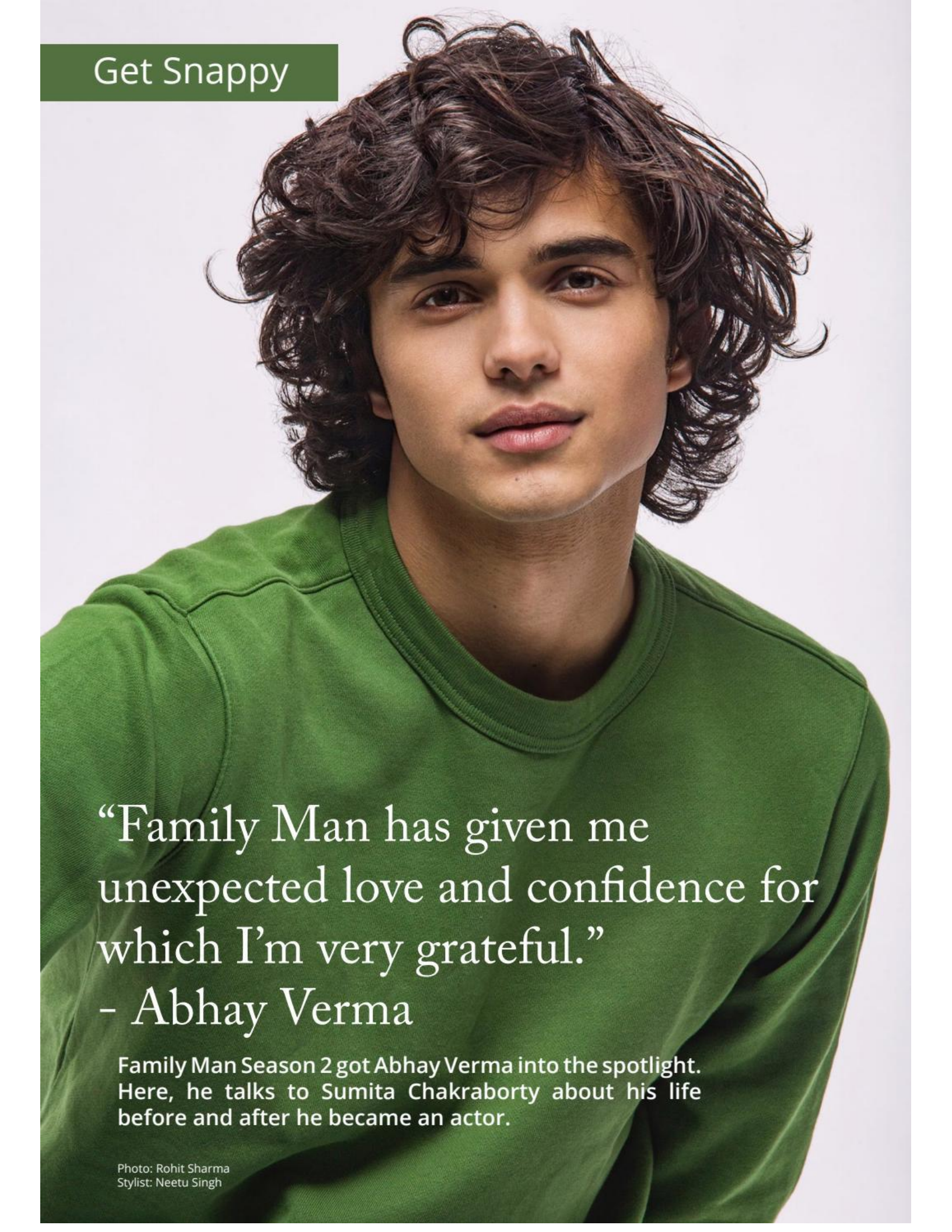
making production and distribution to adults legal. However even in the West there are constant concerns over the issue and measures such as rating schemes that restrict audience numbers, and prohibitions on anyone under 18 accessing it are enforced to the best degree possible, although the internet has made that a much more difficult task. Legal decisions affecting production and consumption of pornography include those relating to its definition, its relationship with prostitution, the definition of obscenity, rulings about personal possession of pornography, and its standing in relation to freedom of expression rights. The major issue there is more in relation to protecting minors and ensuring that there is a line between pornography and prostitution (which is illegal). Of course in India our cultural boundaries are more restrictive to the population in general not just minors, as well as strong religious, political groups play a key role in influencing their citizens as well as legislation.





The bottom line is that we are a nation of an explosive population that contains people from a myriad of different cultural, religious and socioeconomic backgrounds. This makes putting the framework into laws that affect the population as a whole difficult. It is a mammoth task to ascertain the impact of a legislative order on society in general , however perhaps this is our opportunity to use mass communication as the tip of the iceberg to begin sifting through the layers of what governs our rights when it comes to what we are permitted to consume and create.



A portrait of actor Abhay Verma with dark, curly hair, wearing a green crewneck sweater. He is looking directly at the camera with a slight smile. The background is a plain, light grey.

Get Snappy

“Family Man has given me unexpected love and confidence for which I’m very grateful.”

– Abhay Verma

Family Man Season 2 got Abhay Verma into the spotlight. Here, he talks to Sumita Chakraborty about his life before and after he became an actor.

Photo: Rohit Sharma
Stylist: Neetu Singh

He won the audience's hearts essaying the complex character of Kalyan/Salman in Family Man Season 2. He was cast by Sanjay Leela Bhansali for his film Mann Bairagi, a special feature on Prime Minister Narendra Modi. He is also the co-producer of Savarkar and White a film directed by Mahesh Manjrekar and produced by Raaj Shandiliyaa and Sandip Singh. Meet the current teenybopper's poster boy Abhay Verma who is making a huge buzz in Tinsel Town. Read on as he talks about his filmi journey, his take on 'insiders versus outsiders', the casting couch and more.

Abhay, you've been around for a year or two in the Hindi film industry, how has the journey been?

Firstly, it puts a smile on my face that you have considered me a part of the Hindi film industry; a family of which I wanted to be a part of since years, whose eldest members; whom we call as "audience" likes what I have for them. Secondly, I think the journey hasn't even begun for me. I still am a beginner and will always be one who just wants to explore, be part of good films that keep my head up and let hard work and destiny carry me aloft.

Tell us about your experience working with Sanjay Leela Bhansali?

To be honest at first, the dream was just to see him then later it turned to meet him someday. Of course, getting to work with him had always topped my "wish to work with" list and honestly, although it's been 2 years to that but till date it comes as a surprise to me that a boy from Panipat with mere experience of months in Mumbai was able to enter Bhansali productions and get to meet with the legend himself. Every time I remember that moment when I got confused whether to say hello or touch his feet to seek blessings gives me chills because "Ram-Leela" was the film for me which had cultivated the love for cinema and brought me to Mumbai ...and the maker of that masterpiece was sitting ahead my eyes. The problem of how I should greet him and what I should wear was going on from the time I had seen that film. Whatever he spoke for the first 5 minutes of our first

meeting were going up my head because it was a surreal feeling so I just couldn't gather myself together from the reality of me sitting with 'The Sanjay Leela Bhansali'. A great writer, James Ivory once said, "Life has its cunning ways to surprise you, one just has to wait for the right time." ...And so was this opportunity of working with him. I can't forget any of the golden words the man with the golden eye towards cinema had said to me.

How was it working in Family Man Season 2? ...Any fun incidents that you can share with us working with Manoj Bajpayee, the directors -DK and Raj or any of your co-actors?

Family Man has given me unexpected love and confidence of which I'm very grateful for. Working in Family Man season 2 was undoubtedly a very learning experience for me. Not just in terms of acting but the overall experience of how a team works and sets up a project with their spirits high without caring for the consequences, it definitely needs lot of passion and encouragement to pull that off! I remember Raj and Dk sir used to get our favourite milkshakes and what not, after every good take. The way they make their actor understand is excellent. Talking about the 'Family Man' himself, Manoj Bajpayee is one the few actors who doesn't believe in anything other than excellency and the first thing I learnt from him is to balance between personal and professional life which he handles really well because now I understand that we as actors live a sort of nomadic life.



And yes, “Bhukhhad kalyan” was the name given to me when I used to drink the blood (which was actually juice) given to me in one of the sequences. All in all, it was a family-like environment on the sets of the Family Man 2.

Since it's the raging topic, what is your opinion about this “insiders versus outsiders” debate?

My definition of an outsider will be of a person who is not working as hard and as passionately as Amitabh Bachchan, Rajesh Khanna, Shah Rukh Khan or Ranveer Singh because each one of them were an outsider

one day, but what made them an insider was their will and how passionately they pursued their work so that people have not just accepted but also idolised them. And I think words like “versus” should be replaced with “and or with” because it's just us who are differentiating each other, forgetting the fact that anyone with passion like the above personalities are warmly welcomed here as it should be.

You'd done commercials with a lot of prominent personalities, who did you enjoy working most with?

First of all, everyday and every work has been



a learning experience in this Mahanagri. When I used to get the confirmation call for an ad, it was an exceptional thing, which is the same case today also because I can't neglect the fact that I also have family to run and meet my own daily expense as well. It used to double my excitement and nervousness after knowing that I've been paired opposite Mr. Amitabh Bachchan, Amir Khan or Alia Bhatt because I've looked upto them and also got inspired from them. Ah! That sleepless night of preparation on how to be normal and take out the best from me before I stand in front of Amitabh sir is one my fondest memory. Working

with such great personalities also made me work harder to make the most out of that opportunity.

The casting couch is said to part 'n' parcel of Bollywood, have you faced it? If no, what would your reaction be if propositioned?

I've seen that the casting couch exists in films but haven't experienced it yet. And I think there's no need to describe what my reaction will be regarding it as it won't be any different from any other human being. I feel very blessed and thankful that I've met good people who have helped and



Photo: Sayan Surroy
Stylist: Neetu Singh



supported me in making this journey a joyful ride till now. I try to juice each and every experience and try to make the most of it in the best possible way because I believe experiences are something which puts a great impact on how your journey will be. Experiencing such great instances first hand and people welcoming me with open arms makes me happy and privileged, as I'm feeling right now to be featured in one of the most reputed Bollywood magazines of this country, Stardust.

...Any more projects in the pipeline?

First of all, I'm blessed for the opportunities I've got and am working hard for the coming ones. As we know, we have to put our finger on our lips until the right time comes... to say anything regarding it but I'm definitely looking forward to whatever is coming my way and will try my best to live up to the expectations and cross the bar which has been set after "the Family Man". Just hoping that whatever I'm cooking tastes sweet.

You're a co-producer too, Could you tell us a bit about co producing White n Swatantra Veer Savarkar?

For me, it has always been "what more can you do?" So it's not just acting what excites me, it's the process of film making

on a whole of which I'm passionate about because cinema can be the biggest influencer for people especially in our country. In the same way stories like of Swatantra Veer Savarkar or White can change people's perspective about certain things and can bring change in the society in many kind ways. I'd say why not if you get the opportunity of setting up a whole film altogether besides just acting in it.

Lastly, when you look back at your journey, is there anything you want to change?

I'm glad that whenever I look back, a smile comes on my face followed by a deep breath thinking it would have been perfect if my mother could have come from Panipat to Mumbai so my brother and I could come back home to her so we eat and end our day together. I want to be that capable son to get a place for her to come and call it her house but the journey has just begun and everyday is a memory since I had started. It definitely is challenging, but a challenge packed with sensibility, realisation, understanding, learnings, respect and love. I'd stick to my initial days whenever I reach wherever and make sure that the learning continues.

“A lot of people think that they can do acting classes and learn acting... I don’t think acting is something that you can learn.” Meezan Jaffrey

In conversation with Deesha Mirwani, Meezan Jaffrey talks about his legendary grandfather Jagdeep, father Javed Jaffrey, being launched by Sanjay Leela Bhansali, his film *Hungama 2* and more...

The gorgeous Meezaan Jaffrey, son of Javed Jaffrey, is indeed one of the most swooned over hunks in the industry. Though his debut movie *Malaal*, directed by the legendary director, Sanjay Leela Bhansal, didn’t exactly make the box office figures dance in furore, Meezan still managed to garner decent reviews for his acting and his amazing dancing. Currently, his movie *Hungama 2*, a fun comedy co-starring Shilpa Shetty and Paresh Rawal, which released on Hotstar has won a lot of accolades. Read on as Meezan talks about his film journey and more.

How has your journey been so far in the industry?

It has been good and fun, I have been part of the industry indirectly because of my father (Javed Jaffrey) and grandfather (the legendary Jagdeep) so all I know is films, nothing else. I have grown up watching films and hearing about films. That’s all I love and all I want to do is make good films. But now that I’m actually an actor, the process has been surreal and great. Covid came and messed up everything but that’s happening to the entire world and everyone’s dealing with it. I am grateful for the opportunities that have come, there was *Malaal* and I received appreciation for the work I did there and now there’s *Hungamaa* with a legendary director and amazing co-stars, and I am happy to be a part of it.





How excited are you about *Hungama 2*?

I'm very, very excited - the movie was supposed to release last year and the whole thing got pushed back because of the pandemic, so I'm glad and super happy that it's released. A little sad though because it's out on Hotstar instead of the theatres but still nevertheless, it's out and people are watching it. It has been a while since a movie like this has been released so people are enjoying it. *Hungama 2* is about my character Akash Kapoor who comes from a well-to-do family and is going to get married to a girl and all the arrangements for the wedding are done. And before the wedding, there is this girl who comes to his house and claims that her baby is my baby, So the whole movie is about whose baby it is? And how we try to hide that there's a baby and it's my baby from everyone else and at the same time I am trying to prove that the baby is not mine. And I prove that she is wrong and it backfires on me - and in the end you find out who is baby it is. So the storyline is very complicated with a lot of layers and tracks - it has full on confusion and *Hungama* and it is super funny. It is a family oriented film and it also has

a baby in the film, It has wonderful songs, beautiful women and wonderful actors and it's really fun and nice.

If not acting, what profession would you be interested in?

I never actually wanted to get into acting. I just got into it because the opportunity showed up at my doorstep. ...Because Sanjay sir told me that he wanted to launch me. So it was a golden opportunity and I had to grab it. Apart from that, I also wanted to do something in music or sports. I play the guitar and piano and I also sing, and for sports, I love playing football and basketball. So I wanted to take that up as a profession because I was always into fitness and sports but fate had something else in mind for me.

Would you like to share something about your learning experiences when it comes to acting?

A lot of people think that they can do acting classes and acting courses and learn acting, I don't think acting is something that you can learn ...Because this is what my father and grandfather both have advised me. And if you see all the class one legendary actors





we had in the Indian cinema, majority of them never went to any acting schools at that time. They acted by their experiences and situations that they have been in and they observed and somewhere put it in their memory so they could use later on in those kind of scenes. So I think observation is the most important factor when it comes to acting and I advise all the people who want to act to just observe as many different kinds of people you can and put them in your shoes, and it will be easier for you. Also watch a lot of good cinema and watch good films. Learn as much as you can and see how well the actors perform. I'm speaking from my experience though I'm not some great actor that I can give people tips about acting, I'm learning myself as I go through this process.

Speaking of your father, he is a great actor and dancer. Can you dance as well as him? ...Any upcoming movies with dance themes in the pipeline?

I don't know but people have been complimenting my dance moves in whatever songs I've done, I guess somewhere the genes have been passed on ...and I never learnt dancing - it is just gifted to me

from my father. I don't think I can dance as well as my father but I am trying to get there. He's really good at what he does and I try to be as good as him.

I don't actually have any films with dancing themes in the pipeline. I like dancing along with acting, I don't like just dancing And I am more a fan of acting and I want to be known as an actor. I am trying to showcase my talent in every possible way I can and I just enjoy every bit of the process. And for all you know if tomorrow a dance movie comes up, I will definitely want to do it. But right now there is nothing. There are different genres of films I'm doing - the first one was romance and this one is comedy.





How was your experience working under Mr. Sanjay Leela Bhansali?

'Whatever I am today, whatever I have learnt today is because of Sanjay Sir. The experience is too much to sum up quickly because it is an experience since 2014. I have worked for seven years with him and been around him. So there are a lot of memories and a lot of things I have seen. I listen to him talk - it does not be necessarily be about me but just being around him is important because you pick up a lot of things and learn a lot of new things. I keep quiet most of the time - I don't talk much around people, I listen because when you listen - you get to learn something new. Sanjay sir has taught me a lot whether it is about acting or little things like the way I should dress, the way I should walk, the way I should talk. He's been my mentor and he's taught me so much.

You have been linked up with some girls in the industry. I believe it has caused you a lot of awkwardness? Do these kind of media linkups have an adverse effect of relationships?

No no not at all! I think people are also mature and smart enough to understand, Maybe the media has not been but the people understand and it's nothing wrong - it is part 'n' parcel of the profession, I don't worry or over think about it and I don't get worked up about it. This is just the beginning and I'm sure it will happen more and more in the future. I'm ready for it all and it doesn't matter to me, I deal with it in my own way and it doesn't distract me or affect my relationship with those people. So everything is fine - no complaints.

What is next for you?

There are two upcoming projects - and I'm not allowed to give more details about it, but they're different genres - something I'm never done before. I think they should announce it soon.



“Whatever transpired left me feeling hurt and confused.” – Juhi Chawla

Accused of doing things as a “publicity stunt” after she filed a law suit on the hazards of introducing 5 G and the ill-effects it will have on the health of human beings and the environment, Juhi Chawla at last breaks her silence with this expose.

An illustrious career spanning over three decades, a reigning superstar of the 90s, now an entrepreneur and an active environmentalist, Juhi Chawla seems to have mastered the art

of speaking only when the time is right. The Internet went into frenzy when the news of Juhi Chawla filed a law suit, exercising her right for a detailed information on the effects on health of humans and the environment, of introducing 5G. However the actress stressed on the fact that she isn't against the technological advancement but would like the authorities to certify it safe, for one and all, and publish their studies in the public domain, so all could see and be assured .





Infamous for quickly jumping the gun, it was a field day for twitterati who heavily trolled the actress. Juhi Chawla Mehta has been instrumental in starting the conversation in India on radiation toxicity and raising awareness among the Citizens of India of health hazards due radiation from Mobile Tower Antennae.

She has supposedly also been instrumental in removal of mobile towers at hand shake distance of some hospital & residential areas. She further started a movement to curb plastic pollution. It came as a surprise for many when the actress, who's graced every magazine cover, has millions of followers on social media and been on every media channel for over 30 years, was accused of a publicity stunt. However Juhi maintained a dignified silence.

After a month long silence, Juhi atlast broke her silence, documenting her tryst with the concerned official authorities over the course of last 10 years.

Candidly speaking, Juhi shares, "Whatever transpired in June, left me feeling hurt and confused. On one hand, I received some bad press and publicity, on the other, I received

heartwarming messages from unknown people telling me they were genuinely and completely in support. One such message was from a group of farmers in Maharashtra which brought tears to my eyes, they wished to carry out a voluntary drive to collect a small sum of money from each of their 10,000 farmer community to help me pay the hefty penalty, I had been fined with."

She added, "Moments like these made me grateful that no matter what, I had lent a voice to the health concerns of many, many simple people of my country. When the storm died down, and I could see more clearly, I became calm and strong because I realised what an important, timely, relevant and impacting question I had raised. Had it not been so, would the world have erupted the way it did?!"

So why did she remain silent? Juhi avers, "All this while I remained silent because I believe silence has its own deafening sound, but now I'd like to bring forth some very important and shocking details of happenings, in my 11 year journey of discovering EMF radiation, its health effects and the glaring ignorance of certain authorities in this regard."

In The Spotlight

**“For someone who came to the industry with nothing but dreams and grew up watching Amitabh Bachchan on the big screen, to be able to produce a film with him in the lead, is nothing short of a fairy-tale that came true.”
– Anand Pandit**



In conversation with *Sumita Chakraborty*, producer Anand Pandit talks about his film *Chehre*, working with the great Amitabh Bachchan and more.

He made big news with his film *The Big Bull* starring Abhishek Bachchan which was released on Disney + Hotstar a few months ago. Meet producer Anand Pandit, who is now all set for a theatrical release of his film *Chehre* with the iconic Amitabh Bachchan. Here, he talks about *Chehre*, why he was insistent on a theatrical release for his film, Amitabh Bachchan and more. Read on...

Your film *Chehre* with the legendary Amitabh Bachchan is at last due for release. How do you feel and how has your journey been as a producer?

It seems like a cinematic story, to be honest. For someone who came to the industry with nothing but dreams and grew up watching Amitabh Bachchan on the big screen, to be able to produce a film with him in the lead, is nothing short of a fairy-tale that came true. Even though this is my 51st film as a producer, I feel my journey is just beginning. My vision about the kind of cinema I want to create and produce is becoming clearer and more consolidated. I feel en-

tertainment can have a larger purpose and that is why we still remember the films of the '50s, '60s, and '70s because they gave us something to think about and touched our hearts as well. This is the kind of legacy I too want to leave behind. I too want to produce films that speak to not just one but many generations.

How was it working with Mr Bachchan?

I cannot say anything that has not been said about him before. To mention his age is pointless because he has more energy, passion, commitment, and professionalism than people half his age. The reason why his





success has endured is because he never takes it for granted and keeps pushing himself harder and harder. To see him on the big screen is inspiring enough but to watch him at work, is unbelievably inspiring. His work ethic is unlike anything I have seen before. He never gets tired because he loves every second of what he does. There should be a book on just how he has cracked the success code and continued to rise above multiple challenges over the decades.

You had to push *Chehre's* release quite a few times... Could you tell us about it?

'*Chehre*' is a film very close to my heart because it stars Mr. Bachchan and has the kind of production detailing and locations that we have invested a lot of time, thought, and energy in. I always knew this film merited a big-screen release but yes, the pandemic came in the way unexpectedly. It was challenging but no worse than the challenges the exhibitors have been facing all this while.

"There should be a book on just how he (Amitabh Bachchan) has cracked the success code and continued to rise above multiple challenges over the decades."

“Even though this is my 51st film as a producer, I feel my journey is just beginning. My vision about the kind of cinema I want to create and produce is becoming clearer and more consolidated.”



What is the turning point in *Chehre*?

That would be giving away a key plot point, so you will have to see the film to discover if it has one turning point or many plot twists!

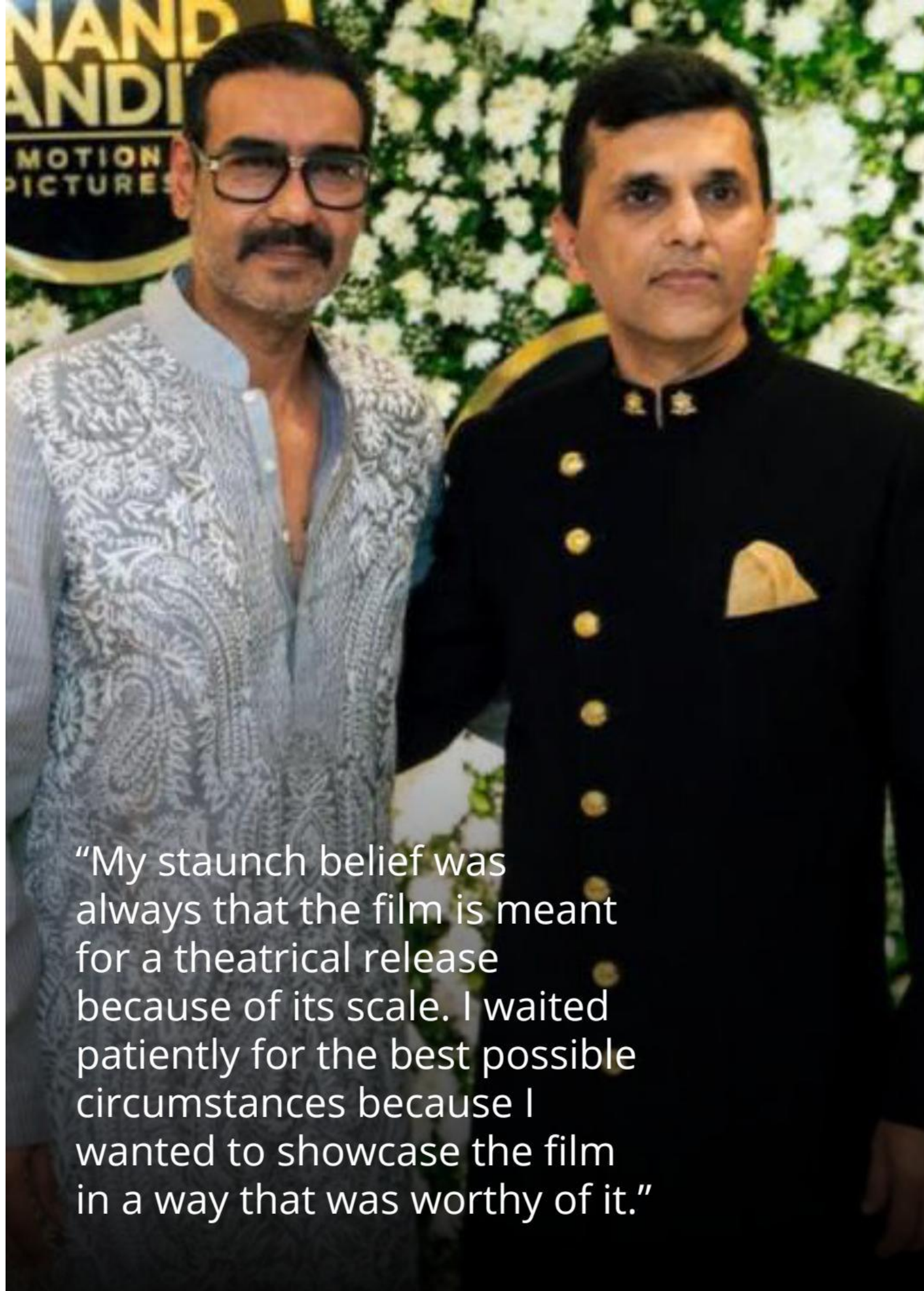
You insisted on a theatrical release for it, why?

Well, as I said before, my staunch belief was always that the film is meant for a theatrical release because of its scale. I waited patiently for the best possible circumstances because I wanted to showcase the film in a way that was worthy of it. Now there is an additional desire to also instill faith and confidence in the exhibitors that better times are coming. With this film, we are making a statement that big-screen entertainment is slowly but surely regaining its majesty.

What's after this?

There are a lot of ideas and plans in the pipeline and hopefully, despite the unpredictability of the pandemic, we will be able to continue to dream and realise those dreams, one project at a time.

“‘Chehre’ is a film very close to my heart because it stars Mr. Bachchan and has the kind of production detailing and locations that we have invested a lot of time, thought, and energy in.”



"My staunch belief was always that the film is meant for a theatrical release because of its scale. I waited patiently for the best possible circumstances because I wanted to showcase the film in a way that was worthy of it."

My Choice

Poonam Khubani

– producer, cinema lover, TV star, businesswoman, advocate of social causes and fashionista, has always made an indelible mark in the entertainment industry. A prolific music lover and an excellent singer, her tryst with music has been a life-long pursuit. Read on as we spotlight the awesome Poonam Khubani's amazing musical journey.

The multi-faceted Poonam Khubani, producer and melodious singer is amazingly talented. Also known as Poonam Kay, not only has she proved to be a singer par excellence – her song *Ek Look Ek Look* directed by Anand Raaj Anand from the film *Aryan: The Unbreakable* and her own albums *Nach Le* and *Tum Chale Aao* have been the talk of the town for their amazingly hummable tunes. She's made many peppy pop videos after that. Not only that, her collaboration with the music whizzes Meet Bros and ace choreographer Remo D'Souza has lifted her to amazing heights. Composers Manmeet and Harmeet Singh of



Meet Bros fame along with choreographer Remo D'Souza collaborated with Poonam for a music video titled 'Pretty Woman'. In fact, Harmeet of Meet Bros fame averred to a question asked on how he and Poonam connected, "We met through a common friend and we were looking for someone who sings well so we told a friend that we were looking for a new golden voice.





Click to play



Pretty Woman



Nach Le



Tum Chale Aao

We have worked with Kanika who sang *Baby Doll* and *Chittiyan Kalaiyan* before and we wanted someone new with a different flair. So my friend said that she has a very good friend in New York - and it will be great because a lot of Bollywood composers don't experiment with talent there so it's untapped. We believe that the world has become a small place - we thought London is done so why not New York, and so why not have an Indian settled there."

He added, "So we met her (Poonam) and we told her that we want to record you and she was kind enough to say, 'You guys come here - why don't we record in New York?'"

Poonam said that it was the most amazing experience! Meet Bros were so impressed by Poonam Khubani that Poonam featured in Meet Bros Party album titled *Party Animal*. The numbers that the Meet Brothers worked on with Poonam were Punjabi numbers. Manmeet from Meet Bros, said, "We want to make it one family. We need to move from East to West and make it one package! We

heard Poonam's voice and it had that bounce even though she's not Punjabi. She has that fresh, playback feel in her voice. We all need to pay tribute to our roots, and we may even do a big Rajasthani song with her since she's from Jaipur." Well, after that, two songs were recorded at a studio in Times Square, and some videos were in the works.

So what was special about Poonam's voice? Harmeet answered, "Poonam has the focus and the persistence and the fire in her!"

So where will the songs be featured? According to Meet Bros, "These songs will be featured in upcoming movies. These are evergreen songs because we believe in music to which everyone can listen to and dance to - songs which are global." Remo D'Souza too added, "Poonam has an amazing voice. This is the most lavish music video I have ever shot, more lavish than most Bollywood film songs." Indeed, Poonam Khubani is the talk of the town for her multi-faceted talents and her powerhouse performances. Kudos to this amazing lady!

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Go Behind The Scenes with Poonam and Meet Bros

Go Behind the Scenes with Poonam and Remo D'Souza

Meet Bros and Remo D'Souza collaborate with Poonam Kay for 'Pretty Woman'

“Imperfection is what stays with you and speaks to you!”

Taking a sneak peek into the cinematic world of Kanika Dhillon.



Known for crafting progressive and powerful stories, Kanika Dhillon has yet again given a blockbuster with Haseen Dillruba. The audience across borders is still in awe of her intriguing tale, impactful dialogues, and gripping drama. Starring Taapsee Pannu, Vikrant Massey, and Harshvardhan Rane, the murder mystery world of Kanika was nothing short of a thrill.

Kanika is known for weaving the most layered and complex characters for the screen. All of them have left an impact and started a conversation in real life and with audiences.

From Rumi of Manmarziyan to Bobby of Judgemental Hai Kya to Nanki of Guilty, all the leading characters of this ace writer's universe have jumped straight from reality to cinema. Apart from giving her actors the layers and nuances to play with, the author uses sociopolitical backdrops to connect with the audience. While Manmarziyan discussed love in the age of casual dating, Guilty shed light on the #MeToo movement.



With Haseen Dillruba as well, the writer went deep into human psychology and talked about love, passion, deceit, and obsession. The panache with which Kanika created rather complex characters is what hit the audience. It was trending in 22 countries worldwide!

Talking about her love affair with messy and layered characters, Kanika said, "Imperfection is what stays with you and speaks to you! The world around us is a lot messier, and that's what I perceive, write, and enjoy giving voice to. I am more of a person who likes to understand the psyche of these so-called twisted and complex characters because that's who we really are in real life. And, that 'reality' is what I like to represent through my art." It's an interesting fact to note that Kanika is also the co-producer of Haseen Dillruba. Is this ushering in the age of empowered content creators?

We are looking forward to her next in the pipeline!

Kanika Dhillon

A photograph of Mohammed Vakil, a man with dark hair, wearing a white kurta with a subtle pattern and a gold pocket square. He is looking upwards and to the right with a slight smile, his right hand raised in a gesture. The background is a warm, textured wall with several hanging light bulbs.

Melody Alert

"No one from my own city knew me when I auditioned for Sa Re Ga Ma Pa but I remember going to Belgium with Mr Sonu Nigam and surprisingly, people knew me there."
– Mohammed Vakil

From being the winner of a singing reality show *Sa Re Ga Ma Pa* to winning the prestigious Dadasaheb Phalke Indian Television award this year, the very talented yet humble Mohammed Vakil talks to **Damini Malshe** about his journey as a singer and more.

Winner of the reality singing show *Sa Re Ga Ma Pa*, Mohammed Vakil is indeed a powerhouse performer. In fact, he has even been one of the lead singers for the Shah Rukh Khan starrer film *Veer Zaara*. Not only that, this talented singer has also been the recipient of the Dadasaheb Phalke Indian Television award. Read on as Mohammed Vakil talks about his foray into the music industry and more.

“Working for Yash Chopra’s banner and singing for Shah Rukh Khan is every man’s dream.”

Can you tell us a little about how got into the music industry ?

I’m very lucky to be born in a family where everyone was into music; the Jaipur Gharana. It is this musical environment that is all I have and know. I have always been studying music with my Guru. One of my very first performances was when I performed as part of a street play. My first steps into the music industry would be because of Sa Re Ga Ma Pa.

I participated in Sa Re Ga Ma Pa in 1994 and eventually won. A few years later in 1998, there was a mega final done by Zee TV where the judges panel consisted of 11 judges; including illustrious names like Jagjit Singh, Naushad and Pandit Jasraj. I sung for the semi-final and the final and that is how I took my very first steps in the industry. It was after this, that my first album came out which was a compilation of songs sung by Sa Re Ga Ma Pa singers from Zee. I was later signed by Magna Sound and released two albums with them, *Kasak* and *Keh Do Keh Do*. *Kasak* actually did very well and I believe it is quite popular even today. After that, I have worked with Zee Music, Times Music Magna Sound and even Sony.

Have you composed music too?

It’s not that I don’t compose. In fact, I recently composed a jingle in New Jersey which is to be released soon. Besides that, I have composed two of my own albums. There’s a lot more that I have composed.



Can you tell us about the entire experience of working on your first film that is *Veer Zaara*?

It was a very great experience. Working for Yash Chopra’s banner and singing for Shah Rukh Khan is every man’s dream. This was a very big event in itself. I’d like to share this one moment that I will never forget. Yash Chopra had decided a meet up after the recording with the CEO Sanjiv Kohli who helped me get this break. It was early evening when Mr. Chopra walked in and requested the CEO very politely if he could bring him something to eat. He was the owner of a huge production house yet he didn’t order, he requested. I was so impressed by his down to earth nature and humbleness. This learning has always stayed with me.

“People wanted my autograph, they took pictures with me, I felt that my life completely transformed - the one thing I got to learn is to handle fame.”



A few people call you guru, how do you feel about that?

So many people add the title of *Ustaad* to their names ...and I think this has become a trend, doesn't matter the genre or the experience. I completed 25 years in the industry in 2020. Pandit Jaraj ji once told me he heard my album *Guzarish* seven times which meant the world to me. So titles don't mean much to me. I always consider myself a student and look up to my Guru, I think I learn a lot more that way.

How do you feel about your journey on Sa Re Ga Ma Pa - from being a contestant to winning?

Very frankly speaking, every man has to go through struggles and so have I. I have even worked as a vocal performer at 5 Star Hotels. There have been times where we haven't worn new clothes even on Eid. No one from my own city knew me when I auditioned for *Sa Re Ga Ma Pa* but I remember going to Belgium with Sonu Nigam and surprisingly people knew me there. It felt very good to be recognized in every city/ country I visited. People wanted my autograph, they took pictures with me, I felt that my life completely transformed - the one thing I got to learn is to handle fame. I think it's very important to keep in mind where you come from and keep working hard. The panel consisted of 11 people who were all big names in the industry and singing for them wasn't easy but by God's grace, I had the confidence to perform . I was only told to perform well and forget the rest. They called me a *motichur* which got me emotional. I never even dreamt of reaching to this level.

"Very frankly speaking, every man has to go through struggles and so have I. I have even worked as a vocal performer at 5 Star Hotels. There have been times where we haven't worn new clothes even on Eid."

Being so young, you still choose classical music, did you have people asking you to venture into more young and mainstream music?

I have always shown keep interest in *shayaries* and classical music which is why I sing a lot of *ghazals* but I also sing *Qawalis* and *bhajans*. I think someone who has learnt and can sing classical can sing anything. I believe I am appreciated for singing classical at such a young age and the audience is also very happy to get a variety of songs from *ghazals*, *qawalis* to *bhajans*.

"I believe I am appreciated for singing classical at such a young age and the audience is also very happy to get a variety of songs from ghazals, qawalis to bhajans."



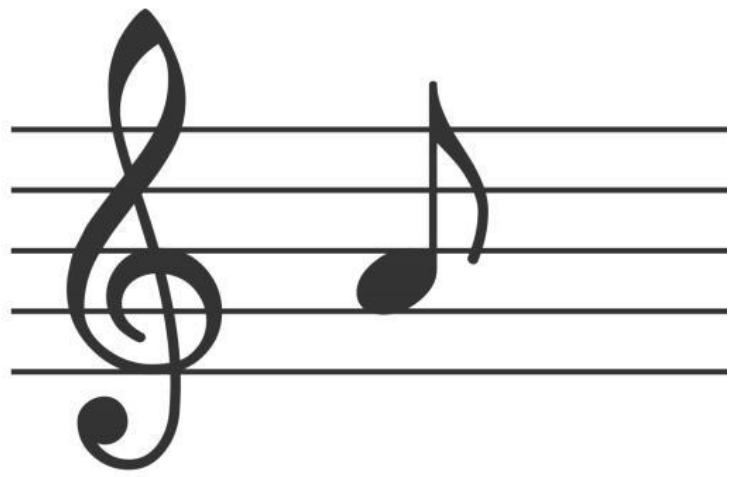
Music Room

“I was born to be a singer and my life is music. No challenges, no regrets, just complete faith, trust and lots of joy.”

– Daler Mehndi

Sumita Chakraborty talks to the bhangra king, Daler Mehndi, the man known for his dazzling flowing robes and diamante studded turbans, who made his kind of music famous worldwide.

He is a legend. A singer par excellence, he is the man who brought bhangra into the global map of music. Meet the amazingly multi-faceted Daler Mehndi, singer, music composer, owner of D Records and so much more, as he talks about his journey from being a cab driver in the US to being one of the most famous singers in India. Read on...



You made Bhangra and Indian pop famous all over the world. How did it all start?

I started my musical career first as a Gurbani singer and then in California, as a Ghazal singer. I made quite a name there. But soon, I realized that if I were to make a mark, it had to be India. In my youth, we were not allowed to listen to Punjabi songs. We could only listen to classical music, Ghazals, Khayal or Thumri.

While driving cabs during weekdays for my brother's cab company, I would have visions of myself performing live at concerts, wearing long flowing robes and diamante-studded turban. Twice, I almost met with an accident, and that's when I decided to make my visions a reality. I came back to India and in 1991, I gathered my brothers and cousins to form a group, "The Daler Mehndi Group". Within a year, I could barely find time for myself because I was performing for the who's who of India.

"Amitabh ji called me personally and said, "Main Amitabh Bachchan bol raha hu, kya ap mere sath kaam karenge?"



I represented India at the Annual 'Voice of Asia' at Almaty, Kazakhstan in 1993, Bhangra was for the first time put on the Global Map. I was judged as the "Most original voice" heard over in two decades among 183 contesting countries around the world. Back home leading newspapers were ready with titles like 'an aureate voice'. Mind you, all this was before I came up with an album.

In 1995, my debut album "Bolo Ta Ra RaRa" created history. It was for the first time ever that a regional album crossed the confines of Punjab and how! Bolo Ta Ra Ra sold over 200,000 cassettes in Kerala alone within a week of its launch. Indi Pop had officially arrived erecting a parallel industry to the then existent, classical, devotional and film music and the rest is history.

How did you enter Bollywood?

After "Bolo Ta Ra RaRa" came "Dardi Rab Rab," which stirred up the nation even more and sent musical shockwaves across the borders that was still savouring "Bolo Ta Ra Ra." I was very clear that I will do film songs if Amitabh Bachchan would call me. My family and friends would laugh at me when they'd hear me say this. The song Dardi Rab

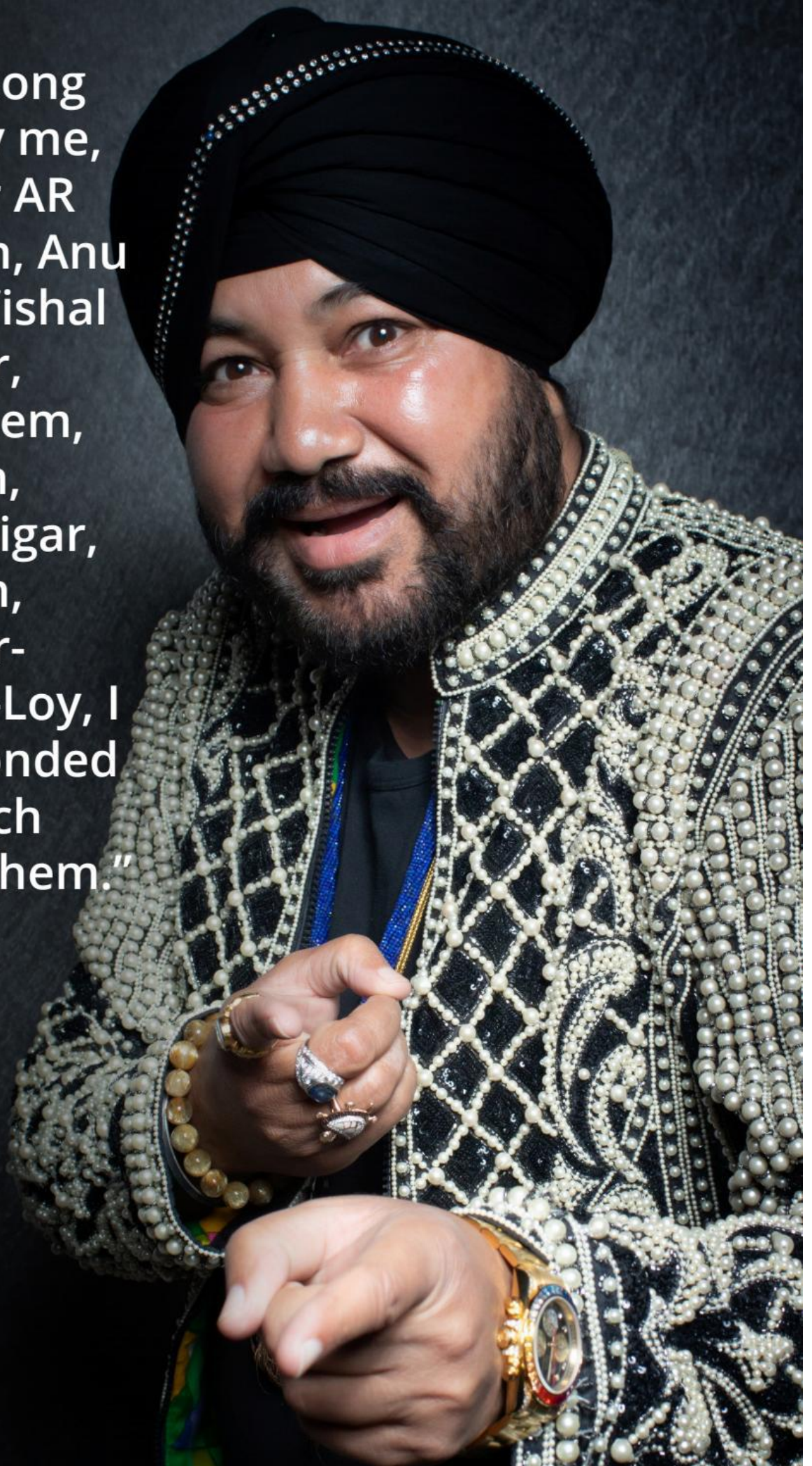
Rab was such a huge hit that it grabbed the attention of Amitabh Bachchan, who was shooting for *Mrityudata* to make a comeback in the film industry after a long gap.

Amitabh ji called me personally and said, "*Main Amitabh Bachchan bol raha hu, kya ap mere sath kaam karenge?*" and he also requested me to add "Dardi Rab Rab Kardi".

I had time after 2 months. He waited and then I recorded Na Na Na Na Na Re for his comeback film *Mrityudata*. The song instantly became an anthem.

"They said that Daler Mehndi's music does very well because it has a pretty women dancing in it. We took the video to Anubhav Sinha and Farha Khan to crack an idea to see how a video could be worked upon with only Daler Mehndi."

"Every song done by me, be it for AR Rahman, Anu Malik, Vishal Shekhar, MM Kreem, Thaman, Sachin Jigar, Mannan, Shankar-Ehsaan-Loy, I have bonded with each one of them."





“Songs that promote filth and pathetic language have nothing to do with music.”

Your song Tunak Tunak Tun went viral... tell us about the making of it?

Tunak Tunak Tun has a very interesting history. The song was Indian Pop Industry's first ever License contract made by an artist. It was the highest ever Fee paid to an Artist. Also it was for the first time ever that a music label took out a paid advertisement in all leading national newspapers – calling me “SUPERLATIVE”, giving its dictionary meaning and equating that to my music. That felt good.

Music companies keep all the rights even to this day: They sign an artist and keep all the rights of the artist. But this was India's first license contract. Since “Bolo Ta Ra RaRa” till now, from 1995 to 2021, all the songs that you hear - I am not talking about Bollywood songs but independent songs that you hear, From Bolo Ta Ra Ra to Aao Ji - are written, composed, rhythm designed, the music direction all done by yours truly. I write (all *mukhdas*) and compose my own songs. I also choreograph the hook steps of my songs videosw



Coming back to your question, Tunak Tuank went viral but this was a song to which the music label was completely opposed to. This song had a very, very fast BPM (Beats Per Minute) and they were of the opinion that no one will be able to dance on it. Certain articles by the media said that Daler Mehndi's music does very well because it has a pretty women dancing in it. I was very conscious about it and I wanted to counter these opinions.

I wrote Tunak Tunak singularly, composed it and designed its rhythm. I was clear about what I would wear in the video and what the dance hook step will be. I wanted the video to have only Daler Mehndi.

I have not gone anywhere and I have been busy singing songs, singing Gurbani and Sufi. Main Khargosh ki chaal nahi chalta. I sing when my heart desires.”



We took the video to Anubhav Sinha and Farha Khan to crack an idea to see how a video could be worked upon with only Daler Mehndi. The company was against shooting a video with just one face. But I was hell bent and really knew what I was talking about.

And after the release of the song, not only did it go viral world over, but also won technical awards in the country. It won the RAPA award and so much more even to two to three years back. The kind of adulation Tunak Tunak has received and is receiving to this day is unfathomable. Internationally from Marshmello, Slushii, DeadMau5, to the current K-Pop sensations, BTS, Tunak Tunak continues to enthrall and engage listeners. It went viral because I believed in myself and my music. The entire song is written by me and it took us a month to crack it. It took me 20 days to complete the track in the studio. The whole album in itself is brilliant. The song is an eternal song.

You have your own record company; how did you start it?

Having my own record label was a natural progression, which started in 2003. . I opened a record label because I wanted to release Gurbani tracks. We have had very good and veteran artists on our roster, like Hussain Baksh Sahab, Imtiaz Ali, Riaz Ali, Bhure Khan Sahab, Principal Baldev Singh, My late father Ajmer Singh Ji, Mika Singh to name a few. . D Records is India's one of the very few music labels to be run by a woman, my wife Taran Mehndi.





"Politics is in every field, whether it is music, dance, drama, painting, regular office going people, food, media.... it's everywhere."

So which music directors have you bonded with?

When I hear a song, I bond with the song, the lyrics, and the composition first and then comes the music director. Every song done by me, be it for AR Rahman, Anu Malik, Vishal Shekhar, MM Kreem, Thaman, Sachin Jigar, Mannan, Shankar-Ehsaan-Loy, I have bonded with each one of them. This is because unless you bond with someone's creation, you will not be able to do justice to that. Moreover, you will not be able to add your colour to it. You have to bond with it, you have to bond with the song.

Any challenges you've faced as a singer?

I was born to be a singer and my life is music. No challenges, no regrets, just complete faith, trust and lots of joy.

What do you think of the songs of today?

Songs that promote filth and pathetic language have nothing to do with music. Par jab kaam sureela and rhythm *sar char ke bole aur bol bhi roohdar hon* then , no matter what language no matter who's singing, it is divine.

Why have we seen so little of you in the past few years? Is it a conscious decision to be low profiled?

I have done Chhalang 2020, Jagga Jiteya 2019, Soorma 2018 , Gold 2018, Bahubali 2 (all three languages Tamil, Telugu, Hindi) 2017, Dangal 2016, Happy Bhaag Jayegi 2016, Mirzya 2016, Bhaag Milkha Bhaag 2013 and many more films. So, I have not gone anywhere and I have been busy singing songs, singing Gurbani and Sufi. See how Tunak-Tunak is dancing away to glory even today, so how can I be low profile?

Main Khargosh ki chaal nahi chalta. I sing when my heart desires. I sing Bollywood songs when the world needs some positivity. I am always there to motivate people.

What are your thoughts on politics in music?

Politics is in every field, whether it is music, dance, drama, painting, regular office going people, food, media.... it's everywhere. And, it is not a great thing, but it's there. It is for the people to decide where they want to focus. My focus has always been on my creativity and when I am not creating music, I am planting trees, or taking care of our indigenous breeds Aravali goats, Thar Parkar and Sahiwal cows. *Achha Khana, Achha Gana, aur apni dharohar bachana bus ye karte busy rehta hu.*

What's next in terms of future projects?

There are about nine film songs - some title, some item numbers waiting to be released. Other than that, I have just released my first Rajasthani folk song AAO ji, composed in three ragas, which is a gift to Mame Khan's daughter on her wedding. It is being showered immense love by the audiences. I am soon to release my first Ghazal album sung with legendary Riaz Ali Khan and Shahazad Khan. The ghazal is a gift to all my fans and to myself. Besides, a lot more Gurbaniis to be released.

"I have just released my first Rajasthani folk song AAO ji, composed in three ragas, which is a gift to Mame Khan's daughter on her wedding."



“The fun of being an actor is reinventing yourself with every character you play.”

Saif Ali Khan on looking and being cool.

Saif Ali Khan is the epitome of keeping it cool. From *Dil Chahta Hai* to *Cocktail* to *Go Goa Gone*, the Bollywood actor is known for his experimental looks and unique hair styles in every movie. Saif got candid about how hair is one of the most important aspects for an actor.

The *Kal Ho Na Ho* actor said, “The fun of being an actor is reinventing yourself with every character you play, including experimenting with looks. Hair is the most important aspect that makes or breaks a look. When on movie sets, I completely trust the experts. However, at home, I take matters into my own hands and opt for simple yet stylish solutions.” When asked which look he prefers from all the various roles he’s played, the actor picked his look in *Cocktail*—the movie that has just completed 9 years since its release. Popularly known for his simple yet sophisticated style, Saif Ali Khan is one of the celebrated actors in the country.

Speaking about the new collaboration with Godrej Expert Easy, Saif Ali Khan said, “Godrej Expert is India’s first hair colour brand and introduced us to many formats of hair colours. Just like me, the brand has constantly evolved be it from powder hair colour to rich crème colour and now to a 5-min shampoo hair colour. Godrej Expert Easy Shampoo

Hair Colour matches my style of keeping things simple yet stylish. The 5 minute quick and easy application process is my favourite feature.”

When asked about how the lockdown changed his tastes drastically, he shared that “Good old kurta-pajama is the most comfortable choice of apparel.” Saif also talked about how he enjoys street food across Mumbai and Delhi both but prefers paani-puris. Is he a foodie? “I do enjoy good food but wouldn’t call myself a foodie. I can’t eat anything except Tinde without feeling guilty about it.”

Saif admits that looking good is a 24*7 job – where he needs to look after what he eats, drinks and how he grooms himself. While everyone seems to think the actor leads a well-balanced lifestyle, he confessed “It’s the hardest trick in the world, I am still figuring it out. But one must always try to lead a very well-balanced lifestyle. It’s important in the long-run.” On being asked what the actor would be in another life, the actor surprised by confessing “Either a rock-star or a librarian!” He also added that he would describe his own life as “Fabulous and hardworking.” We couldn’t agree more!

Saif Ali Khan



Style Show

Jim Sarbh joked about how he gets pulled up by his friends when he arrives at a dinner party all decked up like a typical Bollywood star.

Style, fashion and stars... Let's hear what Jim Sarbh and fashion designer Tan France say.

The post-pandemic world has seen a shift in luxury consumption with personal values now being ingrained into consumer expectations. Celebrating this evolution, Tata CLiQ Luxurykick-started its much-awaited virtual conclave, 'The Luxe Life', putting the spotlight on path-breaking trends through conversations around sustainability, clean beauty, creativity, craftsmanship, fashion, and slow commerce.

In association with American Express, Day 3 of the conclave saw an exclusive conversation with Bollywood actor Jim Sarbh & British fashion designer Tan France as they talked about The Rise of Male Beauty: Breaking stereotypes by being yourself.

Both of them were in different time-zones but their common love for fashion & style is what brought them together for this one of a kind virtual session.





When quizzed about his style aesthetics, Tan France said, "Having grown up in a conservative Pakistani family, I wasn't allowed to wear western clothes a lot and it was only when I grew up, I experimented with style and that set the ball rolling for me."

Jim on the other hand had a conventional approach towards style while growing up which meant wearing baggy clothes & having spiked hair. He also joked about how he gets pulled up by his friends when he arrives at a dinner party all decked up like a typical Bollywood star. The conversation seamlessly transitioned from fashion to beauty as both of them opened up about their mutual love for toner. Jim even talked about his experience of wearing silver eyeshadow during a GQ shoot which grabbed a lot of eyeballs. Tan was quite vocal about his opinions on male beauty.

When asked about his thoughts on it, he said, "Male beauty is in existence since ancient times and it went away for a long time, which ultimately led to people making it a taboo."

The two icons went on to share really interesting opinions on gender neutral fashion. Jim talked about how he would go to the women's section of a store and find gold, silver shades & leopard prints and then when he would enter the men's section, it would all be Beiges, Blues and Browns, which he thought was actually quite dull. According to Tan, brands are also now understanding that not everything needs to be separated according to gender. He spoke about how he likes to mix it up with his fashion and often buys something from the women's department only to team it up with something from men's wear.

Starry Sashay

From oversized shirts to bodysuits and baggy jeans, from ripped jeans to crop tops, fashion trends have soared sky high thanks to our glamour girls in Bollywood. So if you can spot the gorgeous Deepika Padukone sporting an oversized shirt under a black corset top with baggy jeans, you can also see Malaika Arora looking 'oh-so-sexy' in a white co-ord set with a pair of orange pumps. On the other hand, the stunning Rakulpreet Singh, a pap's delight is seen wearing an orange bodysuit with baggy jeans and sneakers while the chirpy Ananya Pandey smashes style trends wearing a sky blue drawstring top with ripped jeans. The sensuous Disha Patani, goes one step better and aces her look by wearing a crop top with nude leather pants.

Talk about style. ...and you have our sexy girl brigade of Tinsel Town leading the trend pack. And, how! So who wore it just right and aced the trend-o-meter? Rate and tell us.





Blast from the past



“A reporter asked me if my relationship with Kabir could be viewed in terms of homosexuality.”

Intense, intellectual, unpredictable, MAHESH BHATT stands out in the industry only because he is too much of a dramebaaz to be ignored. Though he is better known by the company he keeps (Vinod Khanna, Shabana Azmi, Parveen Babi, etc.) Mahesh proves (in our COURT MARTIAL that he is more a man of his own convictions than a chamcha!

Why do you have such an overrated opinion of your talent considering you haven't given a single hit film to date? Isn't it ridiculous for you to have a superiority complex and run down the other more successful directors?

True, I haven't made a single worthwhile film to date. I'm not saying this just because an artiste is never supposed to be satisfied – that's bullshit. My films were bad – it's a fact. I admit it readily. But if someone says I don't know my job, I beg your pardon. I am superior to many many directors who are successful today. I genuinely feel superior – they also feel that about me. I run down certain successful directors for the kind of films they make. I respect other successful directors and have tried to learn from them to enhance my own superiority. So now, I am on par with them. Look, the fact that I have survived in spite of my flops, shows that people believe there is something in this joker. I keep getting work all the time, yet I've never gone to any producer for films.

Are you jealous of Raj Sippy because he beat you into becoming a superstar director after only one film 'Inkaar', while you have remained a nobody all these years?

I am not jealous of Raj Sippy. I haven't even seen his film 'Inkaar'. I know him, but I'm not friendly with him. The only man I am jealous of is Govind Nihalani. Look at the guts he had to make a film like 'Aakrosh' and he has really made a very good film for a first film. I too had a daring



“I am superior to many many directors who are successful today!”

subject for my first film, 'Manzilein Aur Bhi Hain', but that was not a patch on Govind's film. It was more a rebellion of an adolescent, more an amateur dabbling with a sensational film. Maybe after my fourteenth or fifteenth film I'll come up to Govind's standard. I'm really fed up of being a nobody. Maybe I'll make some headway with 'Aarth'. This is probably the first film in which I've felt absolutely involved and almost driven myself to make it as best as I can.





Industrywallas insist that you live off your friends (Shabana Azmi, Vinod Khanna, Sanjeev Kumar, Kabir Bedi, etc.) Do you deliberately make friends with the big stars so that you can 'use' them in your films?

People become friends in the course of working together. I met Kabir for the first time when we started 'Manzilein Aur Bhi Hain', and over a period of time we became friends. I never knew Sanjeev before we made 'Vishwaasghat' or Vinod Khanna before 'Lahu Ke Do Rang'. I made 'Naya Daur' with Rishi Kapoor, but for 'Ab Meri Baari', it was the producer who approached him, not me. Yes, I have exploited my relationship with Shabana for 'Aarth', but I feel that the exploitation is mutual because she is getting as much out of the film. I have exploited Smita (whom I didn't know before I signed her) by getting her to give

me preference of dates, time, and accepting the role for a nominal amount of money. In that sense, I've also exploited my assistants, my technicians and got them to do the film for less. It wouldn't have been possible to make 'Aarth' otherwise. I am experimenting something with this film, and I've assured my producer that his stakes would be safe. I didn't want to burden the film with extra expenses. I don't do this with any other film, not even with my brother's film 'Ab Meri Baari', which is a multi-starrer and will run up the usual costs. But whatever I did was necessary for 'Aarth' and it's not going into my pockets since I'm not the producer of the film. But why does everyone look at the word 'use' so negatively? Don't we know that people always use each other?

“My daughter resents Parveen because she knows that phase was not a very comfortable phase in the life of her parents.”



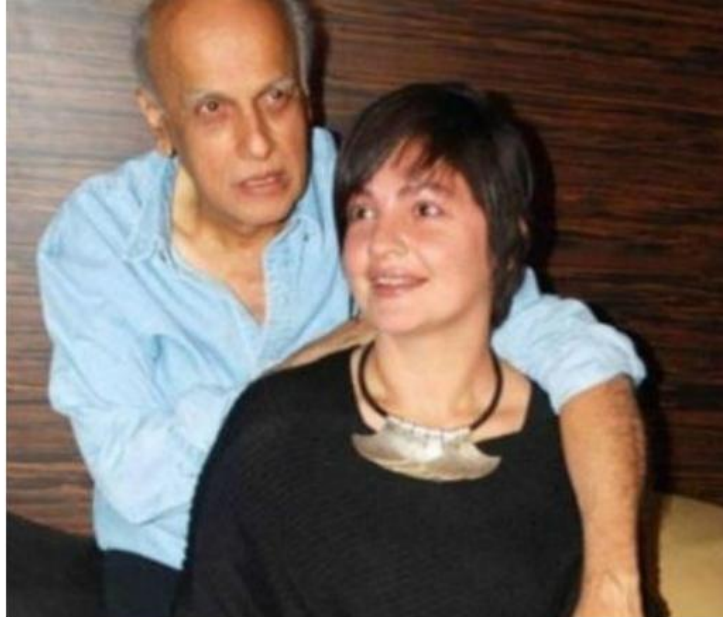
Whatever you are in life, is because of the help, advice, etc., you receive from others. Our whole social structure is based on that. It's nothing wrong. I love making films with friends. Even they love making films with me. It's wonderful to work in an atmosphere of trust.

Isn't it ironical that the only film you tried to make with non-friends ('Ab Meri Baari') is stuck? Has the film's delay got anything to do with the reported bad vibes between you and Rekha? Do you resent it because she makes it obvious that she doesn't have too much confidence in you?

'Ab Meri Baari' is not stuck – it is twelve reels ready. The delay in the film is because it's difficult to get the combination of dates from Rekha, Dev Anand, Rishi Kapoor, who are such busy stars. A couple of shooting schedules were cancelled because the producer hadn't properly committed the dates with Dev Anand. Then, there have been certain financial hassles, which are quite usual in the industry, and which I have no way of manipulating. But other than that, I've had no problems from any of the stars. I am very fond of Rekha. I've heard her quoting to someone that she enjoys working with me. And I with her. She isn't worried about whether she will stand out in my film – she comes out a live-wire! Whoever has seen the film, is raving over her. Rekha is one star I can relate to – I mean, in the sense of getting an intuitive kind of response and performance out of her. I would put her on par with Shabana and Smita, or perhaps slightly higher than them because Shabana and Smita have always worked with sensitive people, but not much has been demanded of Rekha as an actress. That's why, when she gives off such a spontaneous response, it has greater value. I would love to work with Rekha again, but she's too busy these days...

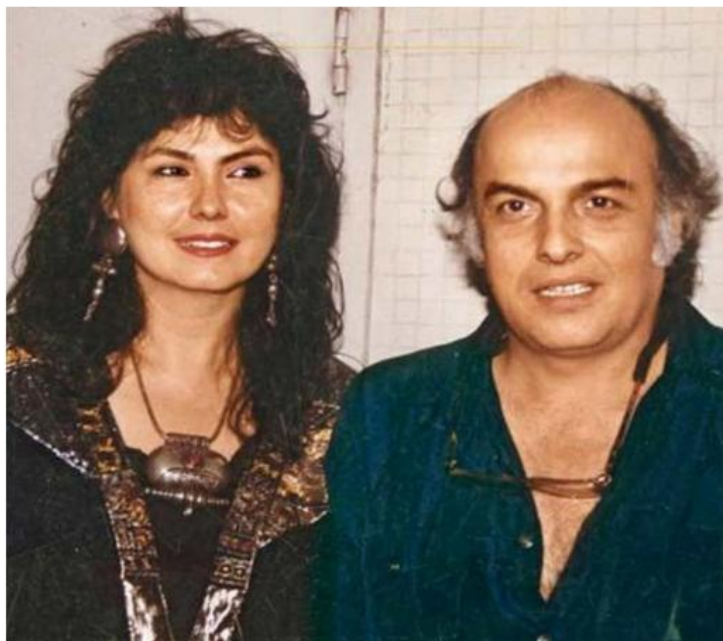
Has Rishi Kapoor started playing difficult with 'Ab Meri Baari' because he resents your recent raves over Kumar Gaurav, Sunjay Dutt and Raj Kiran? Is it true that Rishi wanted to do Raj Kiran's role in 'Aarth'?

I haven't raved over Gaurav or Sunjay – I haven't even seen their films. But yes, I do rave over Raj Kiran. He has a screen presence and I think he is a very potential actor. If Rishi is cut up, that's his own insecurity. These boys are the new stars today, and producers come to me with their names. I like the quality of Sunjay's personality.



I've met Gaurav a few times and found him to be a very mature person. He's not the sweet-sweet boy of 'Love Story'. In these few meetings, I have got to know him much more than I know Rishi with whom I've worked – I don't know why.

“I have never given a thought to whether I'm a ladies' man or if I want to be a ladies' man.”





Rishi and I don't have a social kind of relationship (we don't visit each other's homes, go out together), but we work well together. He has never given me any problems. Raj Kiran's role in 'Aarth' is not in keeping with Rishi's temperament or status. 'Aarth' is a small film.

Wasn't it childish of you and Vinod Khanna to blame Rajneesh for the split in your relationship? What really went wrong between you two?

Vinod has played a very significant role in my life. He is the only friend who has stood by me in my moments of crisis – silently, and without saying a word about it afterwards. Even now, I open up totally with him; I fall back on him for support. He is like an elder brother. Previously, we had a common obsession – Rajneesh. But once I left Rajneesh, our obsessions drifted apart. There was a little hostility between us, but it was very entirely from my side, because Vinod kept quoting the words and ideology of Rajneesh. But otherwise, we are as friendly as before. We share the same warmth; he still drops in at my place casually, whenever he feels like. I love the man.

Is it true that after the flop of 'Vishwaasghat', Sanjeev Kumar felt you'd let him down in your direction and decided to cut off all ties – professional and personal – with you? Did you find it humiliating when he rejected all your subsequent offers?

Sanjeev has a peculiar lifestyle (he wakes up late, works late, etc.) and that's the only reason we don't get to meet often. I had planned another film with him, but it didn't materialize. However, Sanjeev did not lose trust in me in spite of the flop of 'Vishwaasghat'.

“I am obsessed with Shabana Azmi ... I don't deny that I capitalize on her and use her for my ends!”

In fact, he still speaks very well of me as a director and his words have great value for me because they're responsible for my survival in the industry. All the actors I've worked with, have in an indirect way, helped me to stay afloat in the industry. They've been very encouraging mouthpieces.

What were you trying to prove when you boldly admitted to having had an 'intimate' relationship with Kabir Bedi? Are you aware that now people view all your relationships with men in a peculiar light?

Look, a reporter asked me if my relationship with Kabir could be viewed in terms of homosexuality. I said, may be. If he wanted to look at it that way, that was his problem. A psychiatrist says, that all relationship between two men are homosexual!



But if you asked me specifically if I had a kind of a physical relationship with Kabir, the answer is no. He is lovely person, I do love him – but I love Vinod the same way too. Now if anyone wants to play psychiatrist and find out whether there's a latent homosexual in me that's coming to the fore – well, that's his problem!

Tina Munim was overheard saying, 'Mahesh Bhatt simply can't make a film without Shabana Azmi!' Why are you so obsessed with Ms.Azmi? Insiders declare that you encourage her to be your alter ego (i.e. rave over you, quote you on every topic under the sun) because you want to build up an image as her mentor-philosopher-guide!

I am obsessed with ShabanaAzmi because she's a friend, a contemporary, and our sensibilities match on an intuitive level. I feel great sense of ease with her; she feels the same with me. I don't deny that I capitalise on her and use her for my ends. But if anyone should object to it, it should be Shabana herself, not anybody else. Besides, if I have a role in mind, why shouldn't I go for the best? Shabana won't do a film she doesn't believe in. But if she does believe in it, she gives off everything she has. Why shouldn't I use that for my film? I have known Shabana for about seven-eight years, ours is not an overnight friendship. I don't know if she quotes me to others, but I'm definitely not her guide or anything. That's too huge a role for me.



Her people at home, her girlfriends can fulfil that role in her life. But yes, she does open her heart out to me, I open up to her – it's a very natural kind of a friendship. Our relationship is being talked about more than in the past, because we are working together in 'Aarth' and also the spotlight is on Shabana these days. But I was always there with her, even before the spotlight!

Do you fancy yourself as a ladies' man? You got the maximum publicity out of your affair with ParveenBabi, first as her spokesman, and now by playing the strong, silent type. Don't you want to keep the publicity alive by insisting you don't want to talk about her?

I have as many men friends as women. But women do feel more easy with me and I with them. I also feel easy with men, but with a certain kind of men who understand me. I have never given a thought to whether I'm a ladies' man or if I want to be a ladies' man. I don't feel particularly thrilled to hear that women like me. I've never been linked with any women, except ParveenBabi. I did get a lot of publicity out of it. My refusal to speak any more on the subject is because there is nothing left to be said. Everything finished. It shows an acute lack of imagination on the part of the press that instead of thinking of new ways to fill up their columns, they are going on and on with the same thing. I have to put a stop to it.

If Rishi is cut up because I rave over Raj Kiran, that's his own insecurity!"

Are you trying to get your own back at her (for ditching you after her return to normalcy by spreading around the story that Parveen hasn't recovered completely? Isn't it unfair of you to deliberately spoil her successful come back?

It is unfair in the light of what it will do to her profession. But if what I'm saying reaches her, it will be for her own good. It'll teach her to be cautious. Recovery from what she has been through is possible, but the chances of it repeating itself are quite high. This is not my opinion, it's the opinion of the whole medical science and Mahesh Bhatt is only voicing it. Producers who are scared of even the remotest possibility of it happening again, are the ones who say I am anti-her. But I'm just trying to instill a sense of caution that will be good for her and for the people with her.

Do you in retrospect feel ashamed/guilty of the advantage you took of your wife's love for you during your relationship with Parveen? Do you regret the fact that even your little daughter has grown mature before her time and hates the very mention of Parveen's name?

Hate is a very strong emotion for a child. More likely, my daughter resents Parveen because she knows that phase was not a very comfortable phase in the life of her parents. In a situation like this, it's natural that her loyalties are with her mother. But she hasn't become over mature. Her resentment is child-like, arising out of a child-like

embarrassment she feels whenever anyone talks about what happened. I agree that I have taken advantage of my wife, I have not been fair to her. I have been an irresponsible husband and father. But I don't want to destroy our relationship. I am trying to erase the wounds, though not with a guilt-ridden attitude which, if anything, will end up ruining it altogether. I am viewing myself as a family man, which I once thought was a very traditional way of looking at things. But I've tried to do the opposite and paid heavily for it. Perhaps it was essential for me to go through the whole thing to give myself the sense of rest, the quality of maturity I feel now. It's said that the end of all illusion is marriage, when a man comes to terms with reality. I am accepting my responsibility towards my wife, my daughter, my home.

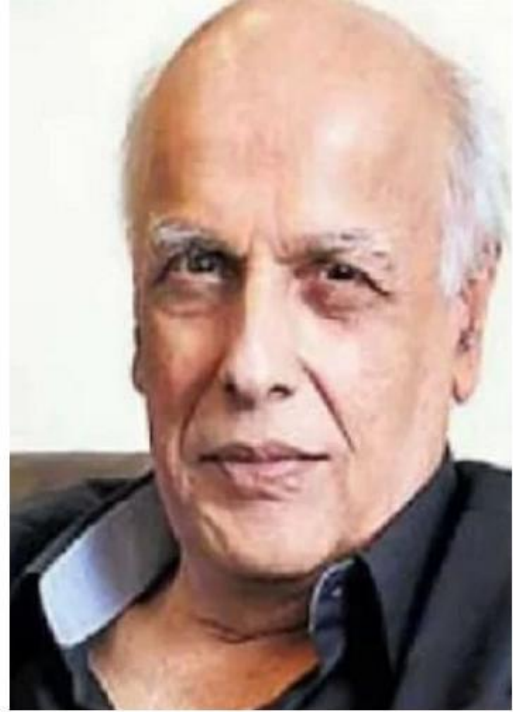


“My wife and my friend U. G. Krishnamurthi tell me that I should be an actor, but I personally feel that acting is too difficult a job for me.”

I spend more time at home these days, I work here. I'm not trying to play the lovey-dovey husband, nor is this happily-ever-after sort of thing. We are leading an ordinary life, but I am happy to be back home!

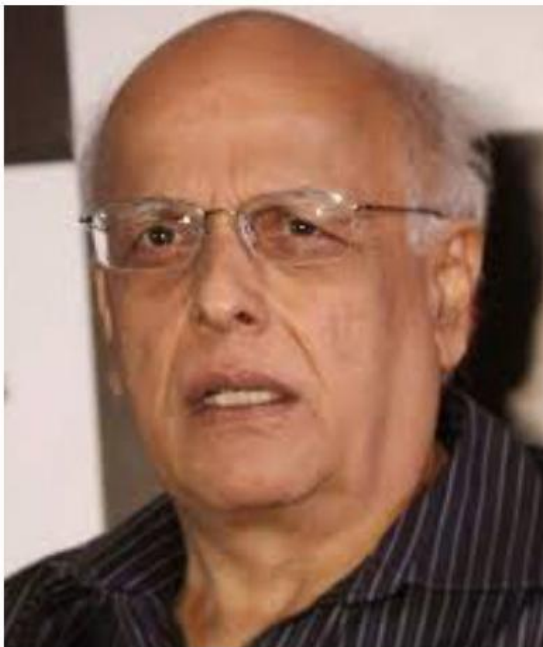
Close friends insist that you are desperate to be an actor and that's why you overdramatize every incident in your life just to vent out your frustrations. Do you know how much panic it causes when you stage one of your periodic 'I'm-dying scenes'?

My wife and my friend U. G. Krishnamurthi tell me that I should be an actor, but I personally feel that acting is too difficult a job for me. I can't do it. If I overdramatize my life, it's just my insecurity crying for attention. I love attention, and so far I've succeeded in getting it whenever I've been dramatic.



◀◀ FAST FORWARD ▶▶

He was always something of a motor-mouth who has an opinion on anything and everything under the sun. Meet producer-director Mahesh Bhatt, the man who loves to shock and scandalise the world with his OTT statements. For example, he had given an exclusive interview to Stardust many years ago making his infamous statement: "I'm a bastard!" which caused a hurricane within the industry. This he followed up by another explosive cover for Stardust where he and his equally candid daughter Pooja Bhatt did a mouth to mouth lip-lock which again scandalised the world and its neighbour. Whatever the topic, indeed Mahesh Bhatt never shirked from airing his super candid and at times even brutal opinions about it.



Controversy's favourite person, Mahesh in the recent past, had a skirmish with another motor-mouth Kangana Ranaut who accused him of flinging a *chappal* at her during the time when he directed her in a film. He was also linked with Rhea Chakraborty more so after they posed for some extreme loved up pictures. However, after the professional break-up with brother Mukesh Bhatt, Mahesh Bhatt has maintained a silence. But then again, that may be just the calm before the storm, so here's waiting for some vintage Mahesh Bhatt confessions!

- Sumita Chakraborty

Magical Moments



Cherish some of the best Bollywood moments

There's no denying that we love Bollywood. Hindi movies serve as entertainers and play an influential role in keeping us happy and inspired. Over the years, there have been several moments from these movies that we have cherished, these scenes have helped us uplift our mood, helped teach us an important lesson and also helped us take inspiration from them in our real lives.

They say 'Kuch Filmo Ka Jadoo Kabhi Kam nahi Hota', and the following list consists of some of the most magical moments from these movies.

Playing Carrom scene - Munna Bhai M.B.B.S. (2003)

Time flies, yes it does, Munna Bhai M.B.B.S. might still be fresh in our minds, but it doesn't change the fact that the movie has continued to rule our hearts even after close to two decades since it first hit the screens. One such instance is the scene featuring Sanjay Dutt, Arshad Warsi, Bomie E. Dotiwala (better known as pappa) and the iconic carrom board. The scene teaches us the real power of love and how it is the solution to some of the most complex situations in our lives. The intense sequence keeps us on the edge of our seats and leaves us teary-eyed even today. So what are you waiting for? Get your glass of juice and get ready to surrender to one of Bollywood's most emotional and brilliant scenes ever.



The Ultimate Battle With Takkar Pehelwan - Akhiyon Se Goli Maare (2002)

When we usually talk about memorable movies, it is typically the lead artists that take away all the limelight, but Bollywood is a big pool of talent, and one such talent was Razak Khan. If you don't believe us, do a simple online search with keywords 'Takkar Pehelwan' or 'Faiyyaz Takkar', all you can see in the results is a certain Razak Khan alongside the legendary artists Kader Khan and Asrani. Directed by the supremely talented Harmesh Malhorta, Akhiyon Se Goli Maare is a comedy drama that 'also' features Govinda and Raveena Tandon. Get ready for this ultimate battle as Govinda aka Bobde Dada _ clashes_ with Faiyaaz Thakkar in 'an action' scene that guarantees laughter.



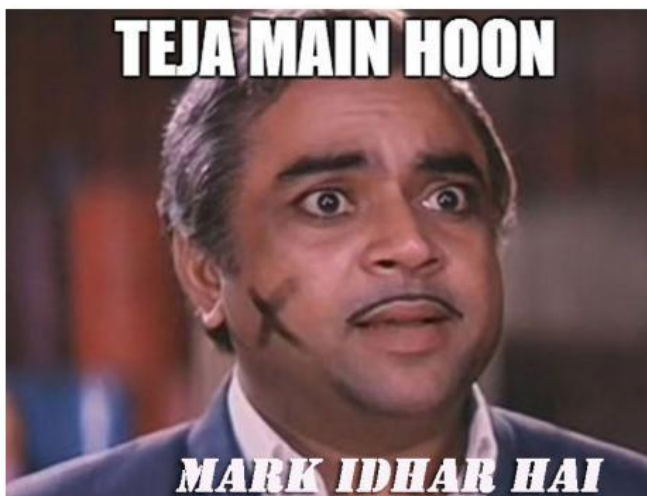
Casino tuitions with SRK, anyone? Badshah (1999)

Talking about scenes that never get old, how can we miss out on a scene that probably features one of the most iconic Bollywood actors - Shahrukh Khan. Before, we share the details of the scenes, one pro tip - do not blink while this scene is on, or else there are high chances that you will miss the supreme card shuffling talent from Shahrukh Khan. Aply supported by Johnny Lever, who also offers tuition classes to his opponent, this scene is iconic for reasons much more than aforementioned.



Mark Idhar Hai - Yes you guessed it right! Andaz Apna Apna (1994)

Apologies in advance if you disagree because you think the entire movie should have been a part of this. But, since we are talking about memorable Bollywood moments, we have listed down a comedy scene that has left its unique 'Mark' from this Rajkumar Santhoshi masterpiece. Released in November 1994, the audience's Amar Prem for the movie has meant that it still manages to tickle our funny bone every time it's telecast with characters such as Crime Master Gogo and intriguing scenes such as 'Teja Main Hoon, Mark Idhar Hain'.



Web Show

...Five films on crimes that are spine-chilling, edge-of-the-seat thrillers that you will never forget.

What is the “one thing” we never want to be involved in, but are always interested in? Thefts, scams, murders, these are acts we would never dream to commit, but often enjoy watching on screen. So, if crime gets you going, PVR Pictures bring you five delicious tales of devious deeds now streaming online:

London Boulevard (2010)

Can an ex-con erase his past? London Boulevard asks this question as we plunge deep into the world of gangsters, glitz and glamour.

The film tells the story of Mitchel, a no-nonsense tough guy trying to straighten his life after a recent tryst with prison. When the mafia bosses wish to pull him out of retirement but he has other plans, things take an ugly turn. Colin Farrell delivers a splendid performance in the lead role while Keira Knightley charms us as an actress who starts off as Mitchel's client, but ends up becoming his love interest.

Does Mitchel get the girl and the dream he wanted, or do you die by the gun if you live by it?



Arbitrage (2012)

Business, hedge funds, corporate corruption, sounds pretty boring, doesn't it? But what if Harrison Ford plays a conniving money man, one step ahead of opponents with his devilish feats? Arbitrage stars Ford at his scheming best as he orchestrates one financial misdemeanour after another and always gets away with a smile. But karma finally seems to catch up when a gruesome accident is too big to cover up and his family starts sniffing something fishy. The film then takes us through twists and turns galore, as we are left wondering about the thin line between greed and morals.



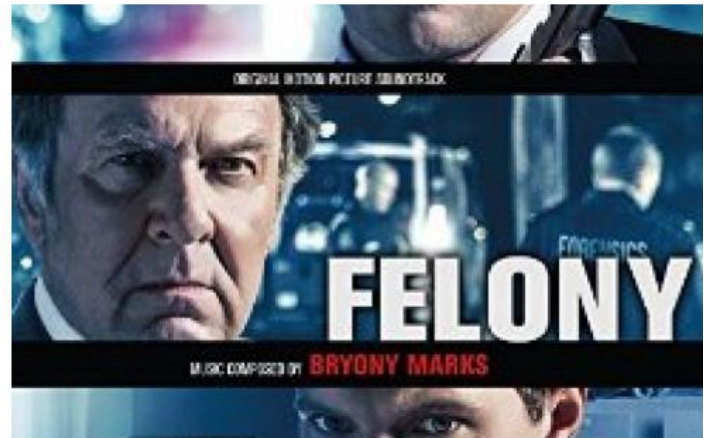
Out of the Furnace (2013)

"Christian Bale and his gun are looking for brutal revenge" is enough of a selling point to get anyone hooked.

This Scott Cooper directorial follows the life of two brothers who are torn apart by wretched fate after the younger one is killed. Bale essays the elder kin who goes after the people who ruined his family. With a star studded ensemble which not only includes Bale but also the likes of Casey Affleck, Woody Harrelson, Zoe Saldana, Forest Whitaker and Willem Dafoe, this is one power packed movie.

Felony (2013)

"All men make mistakes, but a good man yields and repairs the evil", this quote best describes Felony in a nutshell. When an accident costs an innocent life, three police officers are entangled in a dirty web of deceit. One goofs up, the other tries to bury the truth, but the third wants justice to prevail. A dark and intense tale about the essence of integrity and the burden of guilt, Felony is a must watch for fans of police dramas.



Cymbeline (2014)

Business, hedge funds, corporate corruption, sounds pretty boring, doesn't it? But what if Harrison Ford plays a conniving money man, one step ahead of opponents with his devilish feats?

Arbitrage stars Ford at his scheming best as he orchestrates one financial misdemeanor after another and always gets away with a smile. But karma finally seems to catch up when a gruesome accident is too big to cover up and his family starts sniffing something fishy. The film then takes us through twists and turns galore, as we are left wondering about the thin line between greed and morals.

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